Salvation in the New Testament

Perspectives on Soteriology

Edited by

Jan G. van der Watt

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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

For
Andrie du Toit
on his 75th birthday

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LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

J. Eugene Botha
Professor of New Testament, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa
bothaje@unisa.ac.za

Cilliers Breytenbach
Professor of New Testament, Humboldt University, Berlin and visiting professor, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch, South Africa
ines.loechert@rz.hu-berlin.de

H. J. Bernard Combrink
Emeritus Professor of New Testament, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch, South Africa
hjbc@sun.ac.za

Pieter G. R. de Villiers
Emeritus Professor of New Testament, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa and associate, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa
pgdevilliers@mweb.co.za

Jan A. du Rand
Professor of Biblical Studies, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa
jdrth@yahoo.com

Andrie B. du Toit
Emeritus Professor of New Testament and associate of the Research Unit for the Study of the New Testament, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa
andriedt@icon.co.za

Fika J. Janse van Rensburg
Professor of New Testament, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, Potchefstroom, South Africa
SBBJJJVR@puknet.puk.ac.za

Pieter Gräbe
Associate professor of Divinity, Director of Ph.D. program, Regent University, School of Divinity, VA, USA
petrgra@regent.edu

Stephan J. Joubert
Associate of the Research Unit for the Study of the New Testament, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa
Stephan12@absamail.co.za

Craig R. Koester
Professor of New Testament, Luther Seminary, St Paul, MN, USA. Associate: University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.
CKoester@luthersem.edu

Abe J. Malherbe
Emiritus Buckingham professor for New Testament, Yale Divinity School, Yale, USA and honorary doctorate of the University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa
abraham.malherbe@yale.edu

Gert J. Steyn
Professor of New Testament Studies, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa
gert.steyn@up.ac.za

D. Francois Tolmie
Professor and head of the Department of New Testament, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa
TolmieF.HUM@mail.uovs.ac.za

Andries G. van Aarde
Professor of New Testament Studies, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa
Andries.vanaarde@up.ac.za

Dirk G. van der Merwe
Senior lecturer in New Testament, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa
vdmerdg@unisa.ac.za

Jan G. van der Watt
Professor and head of the Department of New Testament, University of Pretoria; and Director of the Research Unit for the Study of the New Testament, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa
jgvdw@ccnet.up.ac.za

Hermie van Zyl
Professor in New Testament and dean of Faculty of Theology, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa
vzylhc.stg@mail.uovs.ac.za

INTRODUCTION

The message of salvation does not only stand central to virtually all the books of the New Testament, but also forms a foundation for the self-definition and identity of early Christians. They left their safe and familiar surroundings to journey into a new world of being children of the unseen God who revealed himself through his Son. As members of the new people of God they had to redefine their own identity in the light of the cross-events, but also had to integrate the implications of this message into their everyday lives. A new lifestyle was called for that was full of adventure—adventure in the sense of opposition, persecution, hesitation, but also of love, joy, peace, and a mission for God. It was not an easy road, this road of salvation—that is why the converts were exhorted to stay on their chosen road and not to falter.

Christianity did not exist in a vacuum, and therefore the Christian message of salvation was contextualized in language that was accessible to ordinary people. Imagery, metaphors and comparisons that these early Christians could understand and relate to became an important tool in the hands of the evangelists for explaining to these new converts what had happened to them when they ventured onto this new road with God. Terms like children of God, reconciliation, redemption, birth from above, eternal life, and many more, became building blocks in forming and sustaining this new community. The apocalyptic message that opens up the future, as well as the strong focus on God's presence and love, gave assurance to the new family of God that they were on the right path.

Language was and still is the carrier of the message of salvation, and it also affects salvation. In this book special attention will be given to the nature and power of this salvific language. Recent developments in literary studies emphasize the power of imagery and metaphors for expressing central religious truths. The emphasis in this book will therefore fall on the different images and metaphors which were used to express the event and moment of salvation. It had been agreed that, as far as possible, the different contributions should not focus on the results (ethics or behaviour) of salvation, but rather on the event or moment of salvation itself, as it is described

in the different books of the New Testament. The semantic scope of 'salvation' has been limited mainly to the event or moment of salvation.

By bringing together a group of South African scholars, an effort has been made to present articles on the soteriology of at least all the major books of the New Testament. By doing this we hope to attain some insight into the differences and similarities between the different books and authors of the New Testament. A central focus was agreed on. We agreed to focus mainly, although not entirely, on the imagery or metaphors used by the different authors of the New Testament to express their thoughts on salvation.

We consequently organized a conference at the Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria. Most of the contributors to this volume attended the conference. All the contributors are South African, with the exception of Craig Koester. He is, however, linked to South African scholarship as an associate of the Department of New Testament of the University of Pretoria. Abe Malherbe (Emeritus Buckingham Professor of Yale Divinity School) was born in Pretoria and also holds an honorary doctorate from the University of Pretoria. Pieter Gräbe, a graduate of the University of Pretoria (up to his doctorate), is presently holding a position at Regent Theological Seminary. He is also an associate of the Department of New Testament of the University of Pretoria. We are also grateful to Professor Francois Malan, emeritus professor of the University of the North and a researcher at the Research Unit for the Study of the New Testament of the University of Pretoria for his assistance with the editing of this volume.

It seemed practical to follow the canonical order in the presentation of our material. Obviously we are aware of the dates of origin and issues related to tradition that could motivate different presentations of the material. However, we decided to follow the canonical order, with one exception, namely, the Pauline material. After consideration it was decided to discuss the Ephesians and Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and the Pastoral letters separately. To prevent unnecessary overlapping, the material of the main letters of Paul is not presented according to the different letters, but according to themes.

In a concluding chapter an effort is made to systematize some of the information and to draw tentative conclusions, obviously not in a comprehensive, but only in a tentative way. The different con-

tributors to this volume were asked to concentrate on their particular books/letters of the New Testament and to describe as accurately as possible what they believe to be the soteriological message of their particular book/letter.

We were also wondering to what extent differences between the authors of the New Testament could be determined by differences between levels of expression and fact. Could it be possible that the same factual reality is being described through different metaphors or images by two different authors of the New Testament? That would imply that the difference between these two authors does not lie on a factual level or on the level of the referent, but on the level of expression. Different metaphors can be used to refer to the same external reality—this implies that if two different metaphors or images are used, it should not automatically be concluded that they refer to different realities on factual level, as is often assumed in theologies that compare different authors of the New Testament. We became convinced that much of what is being said about salvation in the New Testament is said by means of different metaphors or images, although their referent(s) are the same.

I want to extend a special word of thanks to dr. Petrus Maritz of the Catholic University of Leuven, for his invaluable assistance in preparing this book for publication. It is highly appreciated.

Jan G. van der Watt
Pretoria, 2004

PART ONE

VIEWS ON SALVATION IN THE GOSPELS AND ACTS

CHAPTER ONE

ΙΗΣΟΥΣ, THE DAVIDIC MESSIAH, AS POLITICAL SAVIOUR IN MATTHEW'S HISTORY

Andries G. van Aarde
University of Pretoria

1. Introduction

It has become a cliché to say that Jesus was not a political messiah as it was expected that the son of David should be. However, in Mediterranean culture, politics and economy are part and parcel of cultic life, and religion and politics are deeply imbricated with each other (see Sanders 1985, 178; Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992, 138). The salvation-historical approach[1] is a textbook example of an anachronistic reading of Matthew that tends to dichotomize vertical and horizontal dimensions of salvation. My "relational-contextual"[2] approach reads Matthew as a story that re-tells the "history" of how God sent Joshua from Egypt as Moses' successor to save Israel. It narrates a "history" of how God "heals" Israel through Jesus, God's son. Jesus is Israel's Davidic Messiah. As messiah Jesus healed *all* of Israel. Healing in this context is to be released from "political" stress. Matthew communicates this message in a context of opposing scribes, who defamed Jesus as someone who annulled the Torah.

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[1] See, e.g., Barth (1961); Trilling (1964); Strecker (1966); Walker (1967); Kingsbury (1973); Frankemölle (1974); Cope (1976); Luz (1978); Hagner (1985, [1994] 1996, 2002).

[2] Horsley (2003, 70) relates this approach to the idea of "revelation" and describes it as follows: "In a relational-contextual and communications approach, revelation would have to be understood relationally-historically. Revelation would be not something new in itself, but would be revelation about the historical situation to people in that situation, for example, the difficult crisis that people are facing, with no resolution apparent. Revelation was that God was acting to change the situation and to change the people in that situation, so that they can act . . ." (cf. Carter 2000, 2001, 2002).

Matthew originated from the area of northern Galilee and southern Syria after 70 CE (Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν—Matt 4:15).[3] In this setting a conflict existed between the *grammateus* Matthew[4] and the village scribes, who were in the process of establishing the first phase of a Pharisaic rabbinate. The Gospel of Matthew is a product of scribal activity within the context of the revitalization of villages after the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. The communities struggled to come to terms with the loss of both the temple and Jerusalem. Since the city of God no longer existed, they had to find God's presence in the environment of village communities.[5] Amid Roman exploitation, scribes were engaged in village restoration. Conflict existed between two sets of scribes: the Jesus followers, who acknowledged him as messiah and other Israelites,[6] who upheld the tradi-

[3] See also Schlatter ([1933] 1963), who is of the opinion that Matthew was probably an "ethical rigorist" and a representative of the earliest "Christian rabbinate".

[4] The author implicitly refers to himself as a scribe (γραμματεύς) who became a disciple of the kingdom of heaven (Matt 13:52). Despite Senior's (2001, 18 note 27) seemingly concurring with my comments on Matthew's combination of "old" and "new" (see Matt 13:52) with respect to Matthew's understanding of Jesus' conservation of the Torah (see Van Aarde 1994, 127–141), I am not in agreement with his view on Matthew's place in early Christianity. According to Senior (2001, 18), Matthew's "ultimate goal was the realization of an ecumenical vision uniting Jewish and Gentile Christians in one community."

[5] The Jesus movement in Galilee and the work of early post-70 CE rabbis, called the "earlier scribes and sages" by Horsley (1996, 181–184) can be seen as a "revitalization of village communities". After the temple was destroyed, the Pharisaic scribes and sages reorganized themselves in places such as Jamnia (in Judea), Galilee and Syria. There, in the households of the villages, they tried to duplicate the old value systems of the temple, especially regulations concerning hierarchy in society and the purity ideology of the temple. A similar activity of revitalizing village communities was found among the Jesus groups. The value system they implemented was based on Jesus' alternative understanding of the Torah.

[6] The term "Israelites" or "Israelite" is used instead of "Jews" or "Jewish". The latter is an anachronism. The term "Judean" (not "Jew"), a translation of Ἰουδαῖος, is a regional designation for an inhabitant of Judea (Ἰουδαία), in distinction of, for example, an inhabitant of Galilee (Γαλιλαῖος) (see Pilch 1997, 119–125). In this study, the temple-centred religion of both Judeans and Galileans will be referred to as the religion of post-exilic "Israelites". "Insiders", who supported the ideology of the Second Temple, referred to themselves as the "people of God" or the "house of Israel" (e.g. Matt 10:6). Geographically seen, Galilee and Idumea, which were situated concentrically around Judea, were regarded as regions with a lesser claim to purity than Judea. The reason for this was not only the fact that they were further away form Jerusalem and the temple, but also that they were populated more by "outsiders"—people from "mixed" marriages, that is marriages between Israelites and non-Israelites (*mamzerim*). In spite of this, Idumea and Galilee were still part of the "house of Israel". From the perspective of Israel, outsiders were often stereotyped as "non-Israel". They were referred to as *goyim* (גּוֹיִם) or *ethnoi* (ἔθνοι), often

tional view of the messiah. The conflict centred on the interpretation of the Torah: Jesus as the "second Moses" who fulfilled the Torah or the traditional Mosaic view as regulated by the temple cult. Scribes in the synagogues had a problem with Jesus being regarded as the healing Son of David. They could not concede that he was Israel's "new" Moses. They did not understand that Jesus could "replace the temple" while discarding purity regulations, as demonstrated, for example, by his acts of healing performed on the Sabbath (Matt 12:l–32).

In Matthew's story, opposition to Jesus came from the Israelite elite, but only insofar as their collaboration with Rome was concerned. Jesus, as βασιλεύς, stood in opposition to the emperor—the contrast between them being the manner in which Jesus saved (expressed by the word σῴζω) as opposed to how the emperor acted as "saviour" (σωτήρ). Jesus' approach was that of a shepherd caring for his sheep, whereas the emperor exploited the people from whom he demanded loyalty, and he had no mercy (ἐλεάω/δικαιοσύνη). Jesus announced the "empire of God", the βασιλεία of God, which opposed the Roman Empire (see Patterson 1998, 60–64; Carter 2001, 60–64; Horsley 2003, 13–14). In three chapters in Matthew's gospel the instruments of Rome, the client kings, Herod the Great (Matt 2) and his son Herod Antipas (Matt 14), and the Roman governor Pontius Pilate (Matt 27), dominate the scene (Carter 2001, 76–77), but Matthew's vision is that God is greater than the power of Rome. God also punished the leaders of Israel for being allies of Rome, ironically by using Rome as an instrument to destruct Jerusalem (Matt 22:7).

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translated as "Gentiles". The term "Christianoi" (χριστιανοί) is a similar example of stereotyping used by Judeans and Romans to refer to Jesus followers in, for example, Syria (see Acts 11:26, which refers to the followers [μαθηταί] of Jesus who were called χριστιανοί for the first time in Antioch) (cf. Geyser, 1945, 5–16; 1986, 13–20). From an "in-group" perspective, the narrator in Matthew did not depict the followers of Jesus as "Christians".

2. Salvation Emplotted in Matthew's History

2.1. *The Texture of Matthew's History*

The opening verses of a narrative determine the development of its plot (Perry (1979/1980, 35–64, 311–364; Powell 1992, 195–199). According to Carter (2001, 76), Matt 1:21c, "And you shall name him Jesus (Ἰησοῦν), because it will be he who will save (σώσει) God's people [= the people of Israel] from their sins (ἁμαρτιῶν)," has such primacy.[7] The angel's announcement to the child's father forms the vocational beginning of the *history* of the main character Jesus, described as Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ—Matt 1:1]. The texture of this "*history*" (Βίβλος)[8] is composed of:

- the new genesis (γενέσις) which began with the birth of Jesus as the "rebirth" of Israel, the child/children of Abraham which includes those previously excluded from the Jerusalem temple (see Matt 3:7–10);
- the messiah (Χριστός), the "popular" son of David, coming from humble Bethlehem and not from imperial Jerusalem (see Matt 2:1–6);
- the saviour Joshua (Ἰησοῦς), who causes the meek to inherit the land (Matt 5:5; 4:12–17; 23–25), revealed in Jerusalem as the victorious, cosmic saviour-king, the Son of man (Matt 1:17; Matt 28:18), and announced by the chosen, living and dead, as God-with-us (Matt 27:51–54; 28:20; 1:23).

Matthew follows Mark's naming of Jesus as the *Davidic Messiah* and the royal *Son of God* to a large extent, but adapts it to suit his own intention and situation (cf. Kingsbury 1981, 65). In the beginning of the plot, Matthew portrays Jesus as the *Messiah*, the *Son of David*, the *Son of Abraham* (Matt 1:1). The title *Son of God* is however not mentioned at the beginning, but, given its importance, appears at a later stage when, at the baptism of Jesus, it is placed in the mouth of God (Matt 3:17). In Matthew, *Jesus as the Davidic Messiah*, has a pecu-

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[7] This opening verse "shapes its audience's expectations, understandings, and questions throughout the whole work" (Carter 2001, 76).

[8] Mark (1:1) refers to his "story" as Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, Luke (1:1) as διήγησιν and Matthew (1:1) as Βίβλος.

liar connotation, because "God's salvation" is attached to the name "Jesus". *Jesus as the Davidic Messiah* heals and helps people who are of no account in Israel (the outcasts, such as the sick, crippled, women, non-Israelites, and children) and they are the ones who, in turn, acknowledge Jesus and believe in him as the *Son of David*.

For Matthew, "Jesus" is not a common appellation. In Mark people such as Bartimaeus and the two men possessed by evil spirits call him "Jesus" (Mark 1:24, 5:7; 10:47), but this is not the case in Matthew (Matt 8:29; 20:30). In Matthew, by acknowledging *Jesus as the Davidic Messiah*, the two men healed of their blindness *see* what God's salvation is all about (Matt 20:30), while the Gadarene demoniacs publicly announce that God heals Israel through Jesus, *God's son* (Matt 8:29).[9]

The nations come to this realization at Jesus' death when God reveals him as the cosmic "Son of Man" (Matt 26:64) and the Roman centurion calls him, and not the Emperor, "God's son" (Matt 27:54). This acknowledgement follows the signals that the "old cultic order" has come to an end and that a "new dispensation" has dawned (Matt 27:45–53)—an anticipation of the plot's open-end when the disciples are commissioned to include the πάντα τὰ ἔθνη into the "new Israel" (Matt 28:16–20).

2.2. *The Structure of Matthew's History*

The way in which Matthew arranged the material from the sources and added his own also discloses the structure of Matthew's βίβλος. The Markan tradition served as the framework (see Bauer 1988, 23–24) to which material from Q was added (see Davies and Allison [1988] 1997, 97–127). The five discourses of Jesus (Matt 4:23–7:29; 9:36–11:1; 13:1–52; 18:1–19:1; 23:1–25:46) mostly contain material from Q. Since Bacon's ([1930] 1980) epoch-making study of the "five books" of Matthew against the "Jews" this fivefold division[10] has been

[9] In Matthew, people only use the name *Son of God* for Jesus in the form of a confession, and then only after this knowledge has been revealed to them by God. For example, after Peter's confession, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!" (Matt 16:16), is added: ". . . flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven!" (Matt 16:17) (cf. Kingsbury 1981, 72).

[10] Bacon sees this fivefold division as a Pentateuch motif from which he derives a "New Moses" Christology. Davies ([1963] 1966, 15, 23), on the basis of Bacon's view, develops the theory that the author of Matthew's gospel was a converted

regarded as a particular characteristic of the concentric chiastic composition[11] of Matthew's gospel[12] (cf. Combrink 1983, 61–90). Both the disciples (Matt 5:1; 9:37; 10:1; 13:10; 18:1; 23:1) and the Israelite crowds (Matt 4:23–51b; 9:35ff; 13:2f; 18:2; 23:1) are present at the beginning of each speech by Jesus (cf. Keegan 1982, 428–429). These five speeches are directed at the disciples and have particular relevance to the relationship between the disciples and the Jewish crowd (see Van Aarde 1982:21–34).

The five speeches (Matt 4:23–7:29; 9:36–11:1; 13:1–52; 18:1–19:1; 23:1–25:46) should therefore be seen in relation to the narrative dis-

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rabbi, a Christian legalist who offered a systematic presentation of Jesus' "commandments" in five collections, according to the pattern of the Mosaic Pentateuch, as an apology for antinomianism. A development of the Pentateuch analogy is also found among Matthean scholars such as Stendahl (1969, 24–25). Kline (1975) and Senior (1976, 673) interpret the five Jesus-discourses in analogy to Moses' valedictory speeches in Deuteronomic theology, with the "covenant" as their central theme. This fivefold structure has been criticized for its oversight of the discourses in Matt 11 and 23, for its failure to explain the infancy and passion narratives integrally with the total composition, and its inability to indicate any convincing similarities between the content and structure of the Pentateuch and Matthew (e.g. Hill 1979, 140). However, the presence of these five Jesus discourses cannot be reasoned away (Via 1980, 200; cf. also Gundry 1982, 11) as, for example, in the case of Schmid (1965), Lohmeyer (1967) and Gaechter (1966, 60–65).

[11] This concentric chiastic structure is based on a different Matthean formula than the one used by Kingsbury. Although Kingsbury (1975a, 9, 36–38, 161–163) also takes Jesus' five discourses into account, he divides the Gospel into three main parts (Kingsbury 1973, 451–474). Kingsbury (1975b, 7–25; cf. Howell 1990, 81–85) regards this structure as a demonstration of Matthew's salvation history that unfolds in these three phases, 1:1–4:16; 4:17–16:20; 16:21–28:20. The transition from one section to the next is marked by a typically Matthean formula: "From that time on Jesus began to . . ." ('Απὸ τότε ἤρξατο . . .) (Matt 4:17; 16:21). In his criticism of Kingsbury, F.H. Borsch points out that Kingsbury, although working with a combination of a five- and a threefold analysis, does not reckon with all the structural principles of Matthew's gospel. He formulates his view as follows: "It grows increasingly evident that we should regard the First Gospel as the most intricately woven of the gospels, its numerous patterns interthreaded, with even its seams having become part of the designing" (Borsch 1977, 73).

[12] Although there are different possibilities for structuring Matthew's gospel (see, e.g. Davies and Allison 1997, 58–72), the structure of Lohr (1961, 403–435) is the most convincing. Lohr uses the five speeches in Matthew as point of departure and uncovers a concentric chiastic structure (cf. Combrink 1983, 61–90) in light of the formula in Matt 7:28–29; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1: "And when Jesus finished these sayings . . ." (Καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ 'Ιησοῦς τοῦς λόγους τούτους . . .). These five speeches do not represent "breaks" in the composition but should be seen in relation to the narrative discourses that follow and intersperse (see, among others, Lohr 1961, 427; Gaechter 1966; Schniewind 1968, 8; Rolland 1972, 1576f; Ellis 1974; Barr 1976, 354f; Aguirre 1981, 152; Combrink 1982, 16).

courses (Matt 1:1–4:22; 8:1–9:35; 11:2–12:50; 13:53–17:27; 19:2–22:46; 26:1–28:20) that appear alongside and between them. Matthew's story builds on the alteration of *narrative* and *dialogue*.[13] This combination creates the analogy between Jesus' commission and that of the disciples. The one discourse links up with the following speech in an associative manner, which continues the spiral to the following narrative discourse and results in the integration of the Jesus commission with that of the disciples.

The way in which the alteration of *narrative* and *dialogue* serves the development of the plot of Matthew's story of salvation can be demonstrated by focusing on the connectedness between the Sermon on the Mount and the narration of the commissioning of the twelve disciples as Jesus' co-healers. Matt 1:1–4:22 functions as the beginning of these "narrated events". In this narrative discourse Matthew offers initial information with regard to the rest of the narrated events that are consummated in the *middle* (Matt 4:23–25:46) and which come to a close in the *conclusion* (Matt 26:1–28:20). With the Jesus speeches, such as the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:3–7:27),[14] he supplies keys to interpret both the preceding and the following narrative discourses. The first narrative discourse relates that Jesus was born as *God-with-us*, and that he begins his mission of saving all of Israel. The theme of his mission and the *dramatis personae*, as well as the expectations that readers can have with regard to their later behaviour and attitudes, are announced: Jesus' mission as *God-with-us* serves the purpose of "forgiveness of sin" for the Israelite crowds and for the non-Israelites (Matt 1:21; 2:1–12; 4:12–17). This mission is fulfilled in accordance with the will of the Father in heaven, because in the Moses typology (Matt 2:13–23) Jesus is introduced as the obedient Son of God (Matt 3:13–4:11) who came "to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt 3:15). He is opposed by Satan (Matt 4:1–11)

[13] Marxsen (1959, 64) has noticed that the "narrative discourses" are chiefly "historizing" redaction by Mark and that the post-Easter situation of Matthew and his community is reflected in the five Jesus speeches (*Redenkomplexen*) (cf. Schniewind 1968, 8).

[14] The Sermon on the Mount serves the purpose of interpreting the preceding narrative discourse and preparing the following Jesus speech (Matt 8:1–9:35). Jesus adopts a sitting position, as a "scribal teacher" would, to teach the will of the heavenly Father; the disciples encircle him and form the addressees of his teaching; seated in a wider circle around them are the Israelite crowds, to whom the Sermon on the Mount is essentially directed (Matt 5:2).

and the Israelite authorities who seek his death (Matt 2:1–18). He is supported by the disciples who are called to be "fishers of men" (Matt 4:18–22). This Jesus commission is a continuation of that of the prophets (Matt 1:17), which in turn finds continuation in that of the disciples (Matt 4:18–22).

The contents of God's salvation being taught to the disciples mainly relate to their behaviour vis-à-vis the Israelite crowds. The relationship between the disciples and the crowds should reflect a behaviour and disposition that differs from that of the Roman, Herodian, and Israelite authorities. Matt 4:23–5:2 provides the setting for the Sermon on the Mount. (The actual discourse of Jesus begins in Matt 5:3.) The outline in Matt 4:23,[15] repeated in Matt 9:35[16] to complete the circle of *dialogue* and *narrative*, forms the backdrop against which the discourse is acted out, namely Jesus' mission to all of Israel. This mission comprises of the proclamation of the "gospel of the kingdom" (τὸ εὐαγγεωλιον τῆς βασιλείας)—and the "good tidings" of a saviour who cares for the "little ones", who calls them a "family"[17] by resocializing them into God's "imperial household" through empowering healing.[18] This is a subversive act that offends the village elders, outrages Pharisees and Herodians, and anticipates Jesus' critique of chief priests and elders in Jerusalem by exposing their manipulative ploys and misuse of hierarchical power.

Matt 5:20 summarizes the theme of the Sermon on the Mount (see Jeremias [1961] 1972, 23): "For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven." The command

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[15] "And he went about all Galilee, teaching (δικάσκων) in their synagogues and preaching (κηρύσσων) the gospel of the kingdom (εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας) and healing (θεραπεύων) every disease and every infirmity among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick . . ." (Matt 4:23f).

[16] "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching (διδάσκων) in their synagogues and preaching (κηρύσσων) the gospel of the kingdom (εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας), and healing (θεραπεύων) every disease and every infirmity. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them . . ." (Matt 9:35f).

[17] See Matt 23:8b–9: ". . . you all belong to the same family (πάντες δὲ ὑμεῖς ἀδελφοί ἐστε) . . . don't call anyone on earth 'father', since you have only one Father, and he is in heaven" (Miller [1992] 1994, Scholars Version).

[18] "God is addressed as Father-King . . ." (Van Tilborg 1986, 123). See the combination of household ("Father in heaven"), imperial ("your kingdom"), and soteriological ("absolution") terms in the Lord's Prayer: *Πάτερ* ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς . . . ἐλθέτω ἡ *βασιλεία* σου . . . καὶ *ἄφες* ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν . . . (Matt 6:9b, 10a, 12a).

for surpassing righteousness implies that like Jesus, the disciples have to radically obey the will of the Father in heaven, which is accomplished through *doing* it (see Matt 5:16; 6:10; 7:21). The command concludes with the so-called "golden rule" (Matt 7:12): "In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets." This saying is concretized in the subsequent narrative about Jesus' *healing* commission as the Davidic Messiah (Matt 8:1–9:35). This discourse in turn functions as a "transparency" for the next Jesus speech, dealing with the disciples' commission (Matt 9:36–11:1) in which the followers of Jesus become "partners of Jesus" (Vledder 1997, 233) and act as *healed healers*.

2.3. *Key Soteriological Terms*

2.3.1. *Matt 6:14–5; 18:21–35*

The focal point in Matthew's history of salvation is illustrated by the episodes where the words ἄφεσις and σῴζω occur. Absolution supposes forgiveness. The use of the terms ἀφίημι and ἄφεσις (forgiveness) in the Septuagint is similar to the use of the words in classical Greek. These words refer to forgiveness in the religious or ethical sense on the one hand, and on the other, are used in a broader sense. Forgiveness of the client by the patron is expected in a dyadic relationship. In the New Testament the term ἀφίημι is used to refer to the remission of monetary debt (Matt 18:27, 32), to being freed from captivity (Luke 14:18) and to absolution from sin (Matt 6:14–15; Mark 2:5–10; 3:28; Luke 7:47–50).[19]

In Matthew two passages specifically provide the background to understanding the idea of forgiveness in Jesus' message, namely the parable of the unforgiving slave (Matt 18:21–35) and the plea for remission of sin in the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:14–15).

In the parable, the central issue is the choice between the rule of the old order as represented by both the Roman politics of the day

[19] In the jubilee traditions, forgiveness refers to the manumission of slaves and the remission of debt (Lev 25). Liberty is proclaimed to slaves and other prisoners (Isa 58:6; 61:1–2). In Luke 7:36–50, this concept reflects the jubilee images of *a return* to God which occur in Lev 25 and Isa 61, apocalyptically now understood as referring to liberation from captivity and as celebration of God's reign (see Ringe 1985, 71).

and the traditional Israelite experience, and Jesus' unconventional message about the reign of God. Mutual remission of debt implies that the new "economy" of mercy and freedom triumphs over the old order of enslavement and obligations that result in debt or slavery. To receive forgiveness and to refuse to forgive others means excluding oneself from the reign of God (Ringe 1985, 76, 77; see Crosby 1988, 188). Likewise, in the Lord's Prayer remission of sin focuses on the manifestation of God's reign "on earth as in heaven" (see Ringe 1985, 79–80). The image of God's reign reinforces the fact that this reign eliminates dehumanizing patterns at all levels of human existence and confirms God's reign of compassion and love in relationships and the life of all people. This is of special concern to the healing of the infirmities of the social outcasts, namely the "lost sheep of Israel".

2.3.2. *Matt 1:21c*

According to Carter (2001, 76), "Matthean soteriology asserts God's sovereignty over the cosmos by ending all evil. . . ." It is specifically the word σῴζω that denotes "healing" in this comprehensive sense. The word σῴζω is found at the beginning of Matthew's gospel (1:21c) where the name Jesus is linked to his vocation as the saviour who will save (σώσει) the people of Israel from their sins (ἁμαρτιῶν). Common images from the Graeco-Roman world shed light on Matthew's understanding of Jesus' birth as the inauguration of God's salvation of Israel[20] (see Luz 1985, 102, 106). The primary intertextual

[20] Matt 1:21c prophecies the greatness of this newborn king similar to the formulation of the presentation of the birth announcements of the Persian saviour-king Cyrus by Herodotus (*Hist.* 1.107–8) and Alexander the Great, the divine hero of the Greeks, by Cicero (*Div.* 1.23.47). In a Graeco-Roman context such proclamations complied with directives from the *progymnasmata* for writing an encomium (see Neyrey 1998, 90–105). For example, Hermogenes (*Rhetores Graeci* II.14.8–15.5) instructs his students to begin with the subject's origin and birth. According to Hermogenes, the writer should describe "what marvellous things befell at birth, as dreams or signs or the like." Quintilian (*Inst.* 3.7.10–18) teaches that what happened prior to the birth should also be noted, such as prophecies "foretelling future greatness". This can be seen in, for example, the memorable statements regarding the birth and future of the emperors Vespasian and Titus which were made by Suetonius (*Vesp.* 5; *Tit.* 2). Similarly Plutarch (*Rom.* 2.4) refers to Romulus, the "founder" of the "eternal city Rome" (see Rand 1943), and Suetonius (*Aug.* 94; *Tib.* 14) to the first two Roman emperors Augustus and Tiberius, saviours of the whole world (see Taylor [1931] 1981). These figures were destined by the gods for political and imperial rule (cf. Klauck [1995/1996] 2000, 289–302).

analogies come from the references to the miraculous birth of Moses in Josephus (*Ant.* 2.205–206, 210–211, 215–216) and Pseudo-Philo[21] (L.A.B.[22] 9:1–10) (see Bloch 1954, [1955] 1978; Crossan 1968, revised in 1986, reworked in [2003]). According to René Bloch (1978, 67), "Jesus, acknowledged as Messiah, was considered a second Moses, and it was natural for the evangelist constantly to refer to the traditions concerning Moses' birth in order to formulate those relating to the birth of Jesus" (cf. Allison 1993).

It is not only the later Rabbinic tradition (*Meg.* 14.2)[23] that relates Moses' birth to God's *salvation* of Israel, but Josephus, during the second half of the first century (probably 93–94 CE in Rome), also does so.[24] Both Matthew's "vocational verse" (Matt 1:21c) and his "epilogue" (Matt 28:19–20) were modelled after the common Moses tradition (see, e.g. Meeks 1970, 354–371) found in, for example, Josephus' words in the *Antiquitates*: "he shall deliver the Hebrew nation" (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.210 with Matt 1:21c) and "he will be honoured until the end of time by all nations (including [the "new"] Israel)" (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.211 with Matt 28:19–20).

The expression to "deliver (= save) Israel" in "normative" Rabbinic tradition (e.g. *Meg.* 14.2), was commonly used in first century Palestinian circles. Matthew's vocational verse with regard to Jesus echoes the same tradition. In the Rabbinic tradition (*Meg.* 14.2) Miriam's reference to her mother Jochebed who would give birth to the future saviour (Moses)[25] alludes to the word "Joshua" in Num 13:17 (cf. Jastrow 1975, 601). The verbal stem of this word is *jasha*ʿ (יָשַׁע). The hifʿil of this word is used as a substantive participle, *moshiah* (מוֹשִׁיעַ), in a number of Old Testament texts (Judg 6:36; 1 Sam 10:19; 11:13; 14:39; Zech 8:7; Ps 7:11; 17:7). According to Köhler and Baumgartner (1994–2000), the substantive participle means "helper" (= saviour)

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[21] See, *inter alia*, Harrington (1989, 316–324).

[22] Dated between 70 and 100 CE (Harrington 1989, 317).

[23] *Meg.* 14.2 refers to Miriam's words in Num 13:17 (Jastrow 1975, 601).

[24] "This child, whose birth has filled the Egyptians with such dread that they have condemned to destruction all the offspring of the Israelites, shall indeed be yours; he shall escape those who are watching to destroy him, and, reared in a marvellous way, *he shall deliver the Hebrew race* from their bondage in Egypt, and be remembered, so long as the universe shall endure, not by Hebrews alone but even by alien nations" (Josephus, *Ant.* 2.210–211; my emphasis; translation from Crossan (2003, taken from Thackeray *et al.* [1926–1965]).

[25] "My mother shall bear a son [Moses] *who will* deliver Israel" (*Meg.* 14.2—see Jastrow 1975, 601).

in these cases. This meaning of *moshia* recalls the name of *Moses* and is a play on words (paronomasia) on the participle *messiah/mašiaḥ* (מָשִׁיחַ). Messiah became the *technicus terminus* for the anointed son of David (or David's son) as the king over all Israel (2 Sam 5:1–3).

In the Gospel of Matthew the messiah's *redeeming* activity consists of *healing* (see Duling 1978, 1992). In Ps 118:25 an example of wordplay between *moshiah* (=Moses) and *messiah* (=son of David) is found in the expression *hoshiah na* הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא, in Greek: ὡσιαννά—see Dalman 1905, 249). It is evident from Matthew's report on Jesus' "kingly" entry into Jerusalem as "son of David", as Israel's *healing/saving messiah* (Matt 21:14), that he was aware of such wordplay. In Matt 21:9 the evangelist cites Ps 118:25: "Hosanna to the Son of David" (ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ). In view of this wordplay, Matthew's "soteriology" consists of defending the "history" that "Joshua" (Ἰησοῦς) is the messiah whom God commissioned as the "new Moses" to save (σῴζω) Israel from their sins. What such healing implies becomes clear when other passages where the word σῴζω appears in Matthew's gospel are studied.

2.3.3. *Matt 8:25*

Daniel Harrington (1991, 123) states that "(w)hereas in Matt 8:1–17 Jesus showed his power as a healer of various diseases, in Matt 8:18–9:9 he shows his power over even more formidable obstacles: a storm at sea (8:18–27), demons (8:28–34), and sin (9:1–8). These foes all belong to the kingdom of children of darkness." In Matt 8:25 the word σῴζω occurs in a prayer of Jesus' disciples:[26] "Lord, save [us] (κύριε, σῶσον). We are perishing." Harrington (1991, 123) notes: "The background for the stilling of the storm [Matt 8:18–27] is the ancient Near Eastern idea that the sea (especially a storm at sea)[27] symbolized the powers of chaos and evil . . . By showing power over the sea Jesus does what God does according to Pss 74:13–14; 89:10–12." In apocalyptic texts the sea monsters Leviathan (Ps 74:14) and Rahab (Ps 89:10) become symbols of the evil powers that will

[26] The reaction of the disciples to the storm described in Mark 4:38 does not contain the word σῴζω in a prayer, but is conveyed in a statement: "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?"

[27] Daniel Harrington (1991, 123) refers to the "episode as rooted in Psalm 107:23–30."

be defeated when God's kingdom comes in its fullness (see 2 *Bar.* 29:4). In this instance Matthew alludes to Jesus' victory over the power of the Roman Empire, which is also alluded to in Revelation (13:1) with the reference to the "beast with ten horns and seven heads". In his comment on this depiction of "the many-headed Leviathan of Ps 74:14", Wilfrid Harrington (1993, 136), referring to apocalyptic texts such as Dan 7:2–8; 4 *Ezra* 11:1; 12:11; 1 *En.* 60:7–10; 2 *Bar.* 29:4, indicates that the "seven heads stand for the fullness of might—a totalitarian state. The . . . beasts and horns [see Rev 17:9–14] identify the power as the Roman Empire."

However, according to Matthew, Jesus' victory over the power of the Roman Empire does not mean that gentiles are excluded from God's inclusive βασιλεία or that the marginalized now included were only Israelite peasants. The "lost sheep of the house of Israel" pertain to both Israelites and gentiles and include people such as:

- the economically poor who are without family support (such as those referred to in Matt 19:21);
- the socially homeless (such as the "partriarchless" woman divorced by her husband in Matt 19:9 and the children without parents mentioned in Matt 19:13–15);
- and ethnic outcasts (such as the Canaanite woman in Matt 15:21–28 and the Roman centurion in Matt 8:5–13 and Matt 27:54).

Seen from the perspective of Israel as a covenantal family, the above group were marginalized and the type of people that could have been among the crowds that followed Jesus "from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from across the Jordan" (Matt 4:23). They were those who were granted God's goodness because of God's righteousness, the "last who became the first" (Matt 20:1–15).

2.3.4. *Matt 9:20–22*

Matthew's account of the intercalculated story of the daughter of the aristocratic official (not a ruler of a synagogue as in Mark—see Luz [1989] 2001, 41) and the haemorrhaging woman in Matt 9:18–26, is "paradigmatic" of the exclusivity of the "old" Israel and the inclusivity of the Matthean community as the "new" Israel. Matthew changes Mark 5:21–42, because his emphasis is not on Jesus' critique against the Torah, but on the concretization of God's righteousness as proclaimed in the "law and prophets" (cf. Matt 5:17–20).

However, the "scope of the story" should not be interpreted as Jesus' reluctance to criticize the woman whose "faith is mixed with all kinds of mistakes and errors" (as Luz [2001, 42 note 20] assents with Calvin). Indeed, the "healing that the woman experiences is transparent of much more, viz., salvation as every Christian experiences it in life with God (cf. 8:25–26). This story is paradigmatic, therefore of healthy people also" (Luz 2001, 42).

The intercalculation of the stories of the raising of the official's daughter from death and the haemorrhaging woman "draw(s) attention to the boundaries placed upon women because of their gender, which excluded them from the religious and social life of the community" (Wainwright 1991, 212). Elaine Wainwright (1991, 91) explains it as follows:

> The story of the woman of faith stands, therefore, within the narrative of Matt 8 and 9 as an example. Her marginality points to Jesus' healing of those who are most marginal in society, and his restoring of her to new life is a manifestation of the liberating and inclusive nature of the βασιλεία. Restoration to life is highlighted by the threefold use of σῴζω in 9:20–22.[28]

2.3.5. *Matt 10:22*

Matthew's notion of inclusivity is reflected in many aspects. The word "all" (ὅλος) occurs frequently. God's will (θέλεμα), which is love and which Jesus fulfilled, is to be found in "*all* the law and the prophets" (ὅλος ὁ νόμος . . . καὶ οἱ προφῆται—Matt 22:40). This authentic life involves *congruency/integrity* (τελείωσις—cf. Yarnold 1968, 269–273), a "completeness . . . which unites everything in complete harmony" (Newman 1971, 180). Matthean ethics centres on Jesus' words "be τέλειοι as your heavenly Father is τέλειος" (Matt 5:48). Integrity makes *inner life* correspond with *outer behaviour*; a wholeness which is rooted in one's *whole* being, "with all (ὅλῃ) your heart, and with all (ὅλῃ) your soul, and with all (ὅλῃ) your mind" (Matt 22:37), and carried out in love for God *and* neighbour (Matt 22:37, 38), and for neighbour (insider) *and* enemy (outsider) (Matt 5:43–48).

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[28] However, these stories are "much more than examples of faith." According to Wainwright (1991, 214), they are "stories of a woman and a young girl oppressed by religious, social and human boundaries and of Jesus as the one who reaches out across these boundaries offering new expectations for life and wholeness. . . ."

Hypocrisy conceals congruency (Matt 23:13–36). The hypocrites form an inclusive force against those who are the object of Jesus' love, the disciples and the crowds (Matt 23:1), but ironically, they too could become hypocrites by making common cause with the opponents of the "Gospel of the Kingdom".[29] According to Matthew (23:2), such antagonists sit on Moses' seat and love the best seats in the synagogues (Matt 23:6). Included in this group are the Pharisees, scribes, chief priests, heads of families, and Sadducees.[30] They represent the Israelite elite who collaborated with the Roman imperial might (see Harland 2002, 403–404); the συνέδρια (local Israelite village councils) and συναγωγαί (synagogical scribal meetings), which joined forces[31] with the ἡγεμόνας (Roman governors) and the βασιλεῖς (Roman client-kings) (Matt 10:17).[32] Endurance against the might of this world power of nations (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν)[33] will lead to salvation (ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος οὗτος σωθήσεται—Matt 10:22).

2.3.6. *Matt 14:28–33*

Similar words of protection of the ἐκκλησία against the power of Hades are found in Matt 16:18. This reference reminds the reader

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[29] See Matt 24:45–51 (cf. Matt 22:11–14; 26:47–50) where the unfaithful disciple is "put with the hypocrites" and Matt 27:20, 25 where the crowds and "all the people" are persuaded by Jesus' opponents to ask for the deliverance of Jesus to be crucified.

[30] See Van Tilborg (1972) for an analysis of "names" of the "Jewish leaders" that represent a singular opposition (cf. Van Aarde 1994, 76–79).

[31] Dorothy Jean Weaver (1990, 199 notes 117–118) also refers to the "councils" and "synagogues" as the "locus of Jewish jurisdiction" and the "rulers" and "kings" as the "corresponding locus of Gentile jurisdiction". However, she interprets the reference to the authorities in Matt 10:17–18 not as synchronological reference to joined forces but as a diachronological reference to two different settings: a "Jewish persecution" and a later persecution in a "Gentile setting" (Weaver 1990, 94).

[32] In Matt 8:20, Jesus used the symbol "fox" as a reference to Herod Antipas, who as client-king joined forces with the Roman Empire, symbolized as "eagles". Horsley (1999, 240) comments as follows on the pre-Matthean source of Jesus' mission of the disciples in the Q tradition: ". . . the cultural resonance of 'foxes' and 'birds of the air,' suggests something . . . ominous and important . . . While the predatory foxes have their dens and the birds of prey their lodgings—and by innuendo, Herod Antipas has his palace (see Q 7:25) and the Roman eagle its imperial cities—the people and/or their prophet ('I') [= Jesus] have no shelter, no home. The situation that the mission will address is polarized between comfortable predatory rulers and the ordinary people (of Israel).'

[33] The theme of the cosmic war is also found in other apocalyptic writings such as Revelation (e.g. 13:1–4). Contra Luz (2001, 89), I do not read τοῖς ἔθνεσιν as a reference restricted to "gentiles", but as in the case of its other occurrences in Matthew, as an inclusive notion of "all people" (Israelites and non-Israelites alike).

of the scene in Matt 14:24 in which Jesus saves the disciples' boat that was being tormented by the waves of the sea—"a fitting description of the persecution of the church" (Garland [1993] 1995, 158). In both chapters 14 and 16, the ambivalent role of the disciples' spokesperson, Peter, is highlighted. Endurance and faith not only replace fear for death, but also cause doubt (Matt 14:30; 16:22–23), despite the disciples' worshipping of Jesus as Son of God (Matt 14:31; 16:16).[34] In Matt 14:28–33 Jesus reaches out to the doubting Peter, "man of little faith" (Matt 14:30), who cried: "Lord, save me" (κύριε, σῶσον με).

2.3.7. *Matt 16:25*

God's salvation is not limited to people, space, and time, but is based on God's paradoxical saving presence in the life of the "forsaken" crucified Jesus. Jesus' death and resurrection previews God's support for the persecuted prophets in the past (Matt 5:11) and the persecuted "disciples" (Matt 10:16–20, 24–25) during the "post-Easter" period and during the time of the Matthean community,[35] which suffered intrafamilial conflict because of persecution (Matt 10:21) in the post-70 CE period.

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[34] Matthew's use of the ambivalent pair of words, "kneel down in worship" (προσεκύνησαν) and "doubt" (ἐδίστασας), to describe the disciples' "little faith" in Matt 14:31–32 reoccurs when the resurrected Jesus" appeared and commissioned them to "discipling" *all people* by teaching them to do what he did (Matt 28:16–20). In this context it is indeed ironical that "kneeling down in worship" (προσεκύνησαν) and "doubting" (ἐδίστασας) are the last references in Matthew to their role (Matt 28:17) (see Ellis 1967–8, 576). The portrayal of the disciples as ambivalent in Matthew's open-end plot has, from a reader response perspective, the narrative function that the leaders in Matthew's community (as characters/implied readers in/of the ongoing story) would simultaneously associate and disassociate themselves from the disciples. I therefore disagree with Dorothy Jean Weaver (1990, 150–151) that the disciples were "re-established" in their role as "obedient followers" in Matthew's story.

[35] However, these "levels of time" do not constitute a linear salvation-historical chronology. For Matthew time does not function according to a clock, but functions "typologically" (Luz 2001, 89). According to Luz (2001, 89), "typological" means that "three levels of time" are transparent with regard to each other: the past historical mission to Israel became visible in the suffering of the present proclaimers who accept the fate of Jesus. (Giblin 1968, 654–661; Zumstein 1977, 444; and Brown 1978, 74, 90 concur that the "church's" entire mission is rooted in the sending of Jesus—see Luz 2001, 87 note 22.) Luz (2001, 87), however, does not agree with Marxsen (1959, 202–203) that the past mission to Israel anticipates the eschatological mission to the gentiles in the future. According to Luz (2001, 89), the complex mixing of various levels of time should be understood as Matthew's

Salvation, therefore, is not only given to the outcasts, but extends to *all* the "members of God's household" (Matt 10:25), both the leading "twelve disciples/apostles" (Matt 10:1, 2) and the "lost sheep" among the common people.[36] The Messiah of Israel is the vindicating Son of Man who identifies himself with the "little ones" (ἐλάχιστοι) (cf. Weren 1979, 107ff). The "twelve" are "healed healers" who received Jesus' authority to heal others who were being persecuted by the powers that be. Being sent like "sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matt 10:16), the expression "defenceless like doves" and "canny like serpents" in Matt 10:16 is seemingly another Matthean description of the ambiguous role of the twelve disciples as men with "little faith".[37] After Jesus reprimanded Peter having called him an "evil hindrance" (ὕπαγε ὀπίσω μου, σατανᾶ—Matt 16:23), because he intended to stand in God's way of salvation through suffering, Jesus reminded the disciples that "whoever would save (σῶσαι) his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt 16:25).

2.3.8. *Matt 19:25*

Matthew (19:28) seems to be acquainted with the tradition of the earliest post-Easter Jesus group in Jerusalem (see Van Aarde 2002, 118–142; cf. Hengel 1995, 155, 158, 167, 181), according to which

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way of reminding his readers that their experiences are repetitious of what was experienced in the other two contexts. Historically seen, the "gentile mission" thus followed the "mission to Israel". This view also represents a kind of salvation-historical approach.

[36] In Matt 18:10–14, Jesus refers to the "object" of the disciples' mission as the "little ones" and "lost sheep" within the ἐκλησία. In a secondary Western and Byzantine manuscript tradition, verse 11 is inserted with the words, "The Son of Man came to *save* the lost sheep" (see Luz 2001, 437 note 1).

[37] The combination of the words "serpents" and "doves" was used as a reference to Israel's behaviour in an out-group (Israel versus the gentiles) and in-group context (Israel in the presence of God) (see Strack and Billerbeck 1922, 574; cf. Weaver 1990, 198 note 109). According to Matthew, this "two face" mentality is hypocrisy. The ambivalence in the disciples' characterization is now in a command of Jesus so that it becomes a behaviour not directed at the "lost sheep of Israel" but at "wolves"—a metaphor for the combined antagonistic might of the Roman and Israelite authorities. I therefore disagree with scholars such as Weir (1917, 186) and Weaver (1990, 92, 198 note 112) who interpret the comparisons φρόνιμοι ὡς οἱ ὄφεις καὶ ἀκέραιοι ὡς αἱ περιστεραί in such a way that the paradox between serpents and doves disappears. Weaver (1990, 92) understands ἀκέραιοι as "innocent" and φρόνιμοι as "the need for clear thinking as well as prudent actions" while Weir (1917, 186) translates it, "If you are wise as serpents, then you shall be unharmed as doves."

the "twelve apostles" sat on "twelve thrones", obtaining justice (κρίνοντες) for the "twelve tribes of Israel" (cf. Horsley 1987, 201–207).[38] The Jesus movement in Jerusalem believed that Jesus "restored" Israel as an ethnic entity, now including the previous outcasts. Matthew conforms to the Jesus group in Jerusalem (cf. Käsemann 1969, 83, 86), yet his portrait of Peter and the "twelve" as men of little faith remains constant when in chapter 19 he narrates their astonishment that Jesus' understanding of congruency (εἰ θέλεις τέλειος εἶναι) means that the rich should sell their possessions and give it to the marginalized poor (δὸς [τοῖς] πτωχοῖς—Matt 19:21). If this were to be the ground rule of God's βασιλεία (Matt 19:24), "Who then can be saved (σωθῆναι)" (Matt 19:25), they asked.

2.3.9. *Matt 24:13; Matt 27:39–40, 41–43, 49*

We have seen that in the context of the revitalization of villages after the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, the Matthean community struggled to come to terms with the loss of Jerusalem and the temple. They had to define God's presence in the environment of village communities, while they experienced conflict with synagogical authorities who resisted their acknowledgement of Jesus as the messianic 'second Moses' and the one who challenged the traditional Mosaic view that the temple cult regulated the Torah. Matthew (24:1–2) follows the Markan tradition that Jesus foretold the destruction of the temple. He describes both the fall of Jerusalem/the destruction of the Temple (Matt 24:1–2) and the vision of the coming of the Son of Man (Matt 24:27–31) as having been anticipated in the crucifixion (Matt 27:40) and resurrection of Jesus (Matt 28:18; see also Matt 16:21–23; 17:22; 20:17–19).[39] Matthew,

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[38] According to Horsley (1991, 196), "those who have followed or persevered with Jesus are to be 'establishing justice' for the twelve tribes of Israel in a function very similar to that assigned to the anointed one in Pss. Sol. 17:26–32 or to the twelve men and three priests constituting 'the Council of the Community' at Qumran in 1 QS 8:1–4."

[39] The death of Jesus (Matt 27:51ff) causes the veil to tear, which, according to *The lives of the prophets* [Habakkuk] 12:11–12, signifies God's judgment of the temple cult (Garland 1995, 260), the end of the old cultic order, as well as earthquakes (see Zech 14:4) and the resurrection of the dead (see Ezek 37:13–14; 1 *En.* 51:1–2). These are eschatological "woes" (Sim 1996, 104): It is a dramatic anticipation of Jesus' resurrection that announces the destruction of the old and the dawning of the new time (Trilling 1969, 221f; cf. Waetjen 1976, 248).

on referring back to the destruction of the temple in 70 CE, depicts the death/resurrection of the Messiah and Jesus' vision of the coming of the Son of Man as two sides of the same coin.

Similar to Josephus (*Ant.* 4.326), who interprets Moses' "final departure" in terms of Dan 7, Matthew (28:16–20) ends the story of Jesus and begins the mission of the disciples with a "throne-theophany commission" (Schaberg 1982, 189).[40] Matt 28:18f (ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς) is a midrash type apocalyptic allusion with verbatim similarities to Dan [LXX] 7:13–14 (ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐχουσία, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς κατὰ γένη).[41] As in Dan 7, the final moment of vindication is not seen by Matthew as something that would be fully experienced in the present situation. In Matt 28:16–20, the *final* parousia of the vindicating Son of Man is projected to the "close of the age". The blasphemy of the passers by in the crucifixion scene, when they mockingly refer to Jesus' words about the destruction of the temple (Matt 27:39–40), "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself (σῶσον σεαυτόν)," contributes to Matthew's viewpoint. The chief priests with the scribes and the heads of families mockingly add (Matt 27:41–43), "He saved (ἔσωσεν) others; he cannot save (σῶσαι) himself . . . the King of Israel (βασιλεὺς Ἰσραήλ) . . .!" Bystanders who witness the dying Jesus' heroic act of a martyr (ἀνεβόησεν . . . φωνῇ μεγάλῃ), and hear his crying: "My God, my God (ηλι ηλι), why hast thou forsaken me?",[42] misunderstand God's way of salvation through

[40] Even though Matthew does not refer to the resurrected Jesus by means of Christological titles (cf. Schaberg 1982, 135 note 33), Jane Schaberg (1982) indicates that the triadic formula in Matt 28:16–20 in all probability represents an "allusion to the Septuagint of Daniel 7:14."

[41] Both Dan 7:13–14 and Matt 28:18–20 are to be read as referring to "the beginning of the end of the final kingdom" (Schaberg 1982, 115). It is not clear in Dan 7 whether the period of the "evil beasts", the lives of whom (according to verse 12) have been lengthened, will expire when the authority of him "who looks like the Son of Man" will be transferred, or whether everybody, according to verse 14, will serve him immediately. Dan 7:14 resembles Matt 28:17. We have seen that in this last reference to the disciples in Matthew an *open-endedness* is reported in that some disciples glorify the resurrected Jesus (καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν προσεκύνησαν), while others do not (οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν).

[42] Van Tilborg (1988, 894) demonstrates how martyrs in the Israelite tradition died paradoxically with Ps 22:1 on their lips, witnessing that only God's enemies interpret this cry of dereliction as a divine abandonment while suffering for others is indeed God's way of salvation.

suffering in the same way (Matt 27:49), by saying, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save (σώσων) him."

Matthew recalls Jesus' words of the destruction of the temple, his "prophecy" about future tribulations by "all nations", and his remark about love (ἀγάπη as "fidelity to the divine rule enjoined by Jesus"—Harrington 1991, 333) that could grow cold (Matt 24:1–14). While Matthew remembers these words of Jesus, he refers his readers to the prophesy of the prophet Daniel about the victory of the Son of Man (Matt 24:15–28, 29–31) over the Roman Empire, which God had used to destroy Jerusalem (Matt 24:27–28)—wherever the "corpse" (πτῶμα) is, there the "eagles" (ἀετοί)[43] will gather together (see also the parabolic reference to the burning of the city by the Romans in Matt 22:7). God will bring together the "elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt 24:31). Metaphorically seen, the boat, still struggling against the waves, is saved.

In Matt 24:22 the evangelist uses another known apocalyptic phrase (see Josephus, *Ant.* 19:13 and *2 Bar.* 83:1—Harrington 1991, 337) to express God's salvation in the midst of affliction: "And if those days had not been shortened, no human being will be saved (ἐσώθη); but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened." They who endure "to the end will be saved" (σωθήσεται) (Matt 24:13). According to Matthew (24:14), the εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας will be proclaimed "throughout the *whole* (ὅλῃ) world, as a testimony to *all* (πᾶσιν) nations; and then the end (τὸ τέλος) will come." Against the backdrop of their present conflict with the authorities of the day, Matthew leaves his readers in the hands of God who alone decides the close of the age (συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος—Matt 28:20), so that the church, in the mission to the πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, experiences that Jesus is *God-with-us*, for the followers of Jesus have seen the Son of Man come—the boat is saved!

3. Resumé

Matthew's story can be described as 'soteriology' that re-tells the "history" of how God sent Joshua from Egypt as Moses' successor to save Israel. It is a political story about a choice of leadership.

[43] See Carter (2002).

The rhetoric of the plot hinges on the question of the people's obedience: Would they, on the one hand, listen to the voice of a scribe who became a disciple in the kingdom of heaven, teaching them about both the "old Moses" and the "new Moses", or would they, on the other hand, prefer to only obey those traditions which, according to the scribes' teaching, Moses conventionally had said? This choice concretized in either an acknowledgement of Ἰησοῦς as the Davidic Messiah, whom God commissioned to save all of Israel from their sin, or in their killing of him, thereby letting their future children share the responsibility for his blood (Matt 27:25).

The story consists of two subplots. The first of the two narrative lines is about the opposition between Jesus and the leaders of the temple cult. Jesus is inclusive, they are exclusive. They collaborate with Rome, Jesus collaborates with God. Jesus' message is directed at the lost sheep of Israel. The leaders of the temple cult are blind leaders. They lead the sheep astray. The disciples are ambivalent: they are supposed to support Jesus but are inclined to make common cause with the leaders of the temple cult.

The second narrative line is that of the author communicating with the post 70 CE ἐκκλησία. Again there are leaders who follow the author (and Jesus) and those who succumb to the pressure of the Pharisaic scribes. The allegorical story of the razed city (Matt 22:1–14) is an illustration of what their fate may be. Just as God intervened by using Rome to destroy Jerusalem, the city of the collaborators, so too the "ecclesial leader" will be apocalyptically cast out of the end-time messianic banquet, because he did not wear the robe appropriate for the holy wedding. Those who remain faithful to the "law of the messiah", which is the "Gospel of the Kingdom", will live in the presence of the God-with-us (Matt 28:16–20). From a "relational-contextual" perspective, this saving event could be described as "dynastic politics".

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CHAPTER TWO

SALVATION IN MARK

H. J. Bernard Combrink
University of Stellenbosch

1. Introduction

It is interesting that the terms σωτήρ and σωτηρία (except in Mark 16:21) are not used in Mark. Although the terms "salvation" and "saviour" are not present in Mark, the role of "saviour" is not absent. The verb σῴζω occurs in 3:4; 5:23, 28, 34; 6:56; 8:35; 10:26, 52; 13:13, 20; 15:30–31 (and 16:16). It is also generally accepted that the passion of Jesus plays a very important role in this Gospel, and Kähler (1969, 60) even refers to the Gospels as "Passionsgeschichten mit ausführlichen Einleitung". It is often said that Mark 10:45 and 14:24 are the only references to the salvific meaning of the death of Jesus in Mark, and that these references were influenced by the early Christian tradition (Barth 1992, 13). Does this mean that salvation is not that prominent in the Gospel of Mark?

To determine the soteriology, one could begin by investigating the Christology of Mark. It is noteworthy that the Gospel of Mark starts by mentioning the titles "Jesus", "Christ" and "Son of God". Best is of the opinion that it is not the Christology that requires explanation, as He is already Christ at the outset of the Gospel, but rather the soteriology (1990, xxiiif). What needs explanation is the meaning of the different titles being ascribed to Jesus, and especially its relation to the meaning of the life of Jesus as a whole. It remains striking that in the New Testament as a whole the term σωτήρ is used so seldom, even though the function of Saviour is quite obvious in the New Testament and in Mark. This may be because the term was ideologically loaded very heavily in New Testament times. It is interesting to note that Oscar Cullmann refers to the title σωτήρ as relatively late and one that could not have functioned as a title for Jesus in Palestine "da man ja den Eigenname 'Jesus' einfach hätte wiederholen müssen: dem 'Jesus Soter' würde ja ein 'Jeschua Jeschua'

entsprechen" (1963, 252). Ferdinand Hahn also ignores the title and function of saviour, although he admits that it deserves investigation (1966, 45). It is then significant that Matera states that the "Christology of Mark's Gospel is in the story it tells" (1999, 24) and that Mark would define Messiahship in terms of Jesus and not Jesus in terms of Messiahship (see also Kingsbury 1983).

Narrative criticism has also broadened the interpretation of the Gospels (Powell, 1990), and the different titles associated with Jesus acquire their content from the narrative as a whole. "Nur wenn er [der Leser HJBC] den 'Plot' der im Evangelium erzählten Gesamthandlung verfolgt, erschliesst sich ihm das Persongeheimnis Jesu, damit—als dessen Konsequenz—das Kreuz und so am ende sein eigenes 'Heil'" (Backhaus 1995, 93). The various Christological titles of Jesus are not inherently Christological, and also not unambiguous. They obtain their meaning in and through the narrative as such. It must be kept in mind that the role of the titles must first and foremost be seen in the context of characterisation in the narrative. This means that we do not have a systematic Christology in the Gospel, but a narrative presentation (Broadhead 1999, 26.29).

According to Schildgen, the Gospel of Mark can be seen as a "popular and contemporary form of a 'sacred' narrative using the resources of Hebraic history, fiction, apocalypse and biography. Mark aligns his genre choice with his ideological intentions. In his version of Jesus, he presents a wonderworking, wandering teacher, who violates contemporary social, religious, and political habits and behaviour, until his death when order is restored" (1998, 57). While letters are appropriate to correct and persuade readers on many issues, narratives are ill-suited to such purposes, and one has to infer the correct position from the actions and reactions of various characters. Narratives further invite readers to identify with the hero and to develop empathy with his or her position and fate (cf. Tolbert 1999, 53).

It must also be acknowledged that the issue of salvation can be communicated through metaphors (cf. Van Deventer 1986). In the case of Paul, for example, a large number of metaphors are used, drawn from four different spheres: social interaction, biological and physiological interaction, the cultic and ritual realm, as well as from the technical sphere of life. When attention is given to motifs and soteriological *topoi*, it is also important to keep in mind that, according to some, our interest in terms and metaphors rests basically in their effect or end result (Marrow 1990, 278f).

We take, then, the Gospel of Mark as narrative as a point of departure (cf. Best 1983; Breytenbach 1985; Kingsbury 1983, 45). This text is to be interpreted in its socio-cultural and literary context, taking its narratorial and social dimensions into account (cf. Robbins 1992b). This implies taking the worldviews and mindsets of the world in which Mark originated into consideration. We shall endeavour to deduce from the narrative as a whole how this narrative communicates the salvific intervention of God in and through Jesus. The way in which, for example, the emphasis on the opposition to Jesus receives greater attention towards the end of the narrative has always been noted. This already implies careful attention must be paid to the so-called middle section of Mark. Actually, the texture of the narrative as a whole has to be taken into consideration.

Part of a socio-rhetorical interpretation is to recognise that various types of discourses can be seen belonging to the rich texture of the Gospel of Mark. One can discern prophetic, miracle, wisdom, apocalyptic, and suffering-death discourses in Mark. These different types of discourse, or "rhetorolects", developed amongst early Christians in the rhetorical environment of the Mediterranean discourse (Robbins 2002, 16). In trying to understand the way salvation plays a role in Mark as narrative, the contribution of these different discourses can also play a role.

2. Terminology and Narrative Roles

2.1. *Wonder-Worker*

As has been pointed out, the verb σῴζω occurs thirteen times in Mark, whereas the term σωτήρ is absent. It occurs six times in the context of healings by Jesus, while the other occurrences are related to losing or saving one's life. Van Deventer (1986, 87f) highlights the following basic semantic components of salvation as event:

a) Someone finds himself in a *distressful situation* (this is of course an implicational component);
b) A *change* in this situation is effected by the *intervention* of someone else (this is the core component of this meaning);
c) Negatively the *distress is relieved*, and positively the person *is brought into a blissful position* (this may be regarded as an inferential component).

This will in all probability also be true of salvation in Mark. These facts are, however, to be placed in the broader perspective of a narratological approach to Mark. Davidsen's (1993) semiotic reading of Mark as narrative helps us a great deal in this respect. This also enables us to see that the narrative theme, salvation in Mark, is more prevalent than can be deduced from the occurrence of the word group σῴζω alone. This does not mean, however, that it is not worthwhile to take serious note of the lexeme σῴζω and related concepts as a point of departure.

Davidsen (1993, 61f) distinguishes four abstract narrative genres and narrative roles:

	BEING	NON-BEING
CHANGE	Progression genre Role: Progressor (subject) —Beneficiary (object)	Degression genre Role: Degressor (subject)— Victim (object)
PRESERVATION	Protection genre Role: Polemic: Degressor (subject)—Victim (object) Core: Beneficiary (object) —Protector (subject)	Repression genre Role: Polemic: Progressor (subject)— Beneficiary (object) Core: Victim (object)— Repressor (subject)

The narrative Jesus appears basically in three roles: as wonder worker, as proclaimer and as saviour. For our purpose, the first and third roles are especially important. The discursive actor roles are the semantically concrete articulation of narrative actant roles.

In investigating the role of wonder worker, Davidsen deals with different roles constituting the thematic role of protector: the healer, the exorcist and the shepherd. The role σωτήρ (in connection with healing) is an abstract role, and is almost identical with the protector role. The verb σῴζειν basically signifies to preserve, to protect, to deliver, to free from danger, to save from something threatening. Although its main use is medical, it can also designate the rescue from any danger, even mortal danger. Salvation is the opposite of ἀπώλεια, destruction. According to Davidsen (1993, 71):

> [I]t is the thematic, although rather abstract, role σωτήρ that is most nearly identical with the narrative role of protector: to save is to save (protection/protector) someone (victim/beneficiary) from something that threatens (degression/degressor). Pragmatically, the wonder narrative

defines Jesus as σωτήρ, savior. Conversely, the protector role gives the term salvation its pregnant content.

Implied in the role of the protector is the beneficiary or the victim of the degressor. The thematic victim roles are then the sick, the possessed and the flock (14:72). Mark 2:17 contains a central saying in this respect: "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (NIV). The thematic victim-role can then be defined as a person in distress: χρείαν ἔχων—χρείαν ἔχω—χρείαν ἔχουσιν. It is also important to see that the basic contrast between being the victim and the beneficiary is the contrast between death and life, to kill/lose a life or to save a life (8:35). The counterpart to the role of the protector, the σωτήρ, is the ἀπολλύμενος—ἀπόλλυμαι—ἀπώλεια. Davidsen sees in the wonder narrative the narrative genre of Protection, which according to his scheme includes the constitutive narrative roles: Degressor—Victim/Beneficiary—Protector (1993, 84). The wonder narrative's narrative roles or actants are articulated in the gospel narrative and specified in thematic roles which, at a superior level of generalization, include the following roles: ἀπόλλυων—ἀπολλύμμενος—σωζόμενος—σωτήρ. The role ἀπόλλυων is realised by the actor Satan, the role σωτήρ by the actor Jesus. The role ἀπολλύμενος/σωζόμενος is realised by various actors like the man with the unclean spirit, the little daughter, the women with haemorrhage, the blind man etc (Davidsen 1993, 84).

2.2. *Saviour*

The other narrative role to be considered is that of saviour. Although the designation σωτήρ is absent in Mark, it has already been shown that the narrative role of σωτήρ is nearly identical with the narrative role of protector.

Reference has already been made to 8:35ff and the contrast between ἀπόλλυμι and σῴζω, between life and death, salvation and damnation. The role of saviour is to save someone who is a victim of a threatening or on-going process of degression. "He may appear as savior in a narrow sense (e.g. as healer) or in a broader sense (as the one who saves his people from sin); but the roles of the narrative genre remain the same" (Davidsen 1993, 223).

The content of salvation can be differentiated as provisional and definite salvation. The healings of Jesus have a provisional salvific

significance in themselves in redressing the physical need, but they also point beyond themselves as signs of the coming of the kingdom of God. Even in the case of death's reversal with the daughter of Jairus (5:35, 42), salvation is only provisional. There are, nevertheless, in this provisional salvation as rescue from death links to Jesus' own resurrection—cf. in (5:41, 42) the ἔγειρε and ἀνέστη (Marcus 2000, 372).

A number of issues are implied here, such as the fact that Jesus saved others, but not himself (Mark 15:31), and the implication thereof for his mission of saving others. The role of God in the process of salvation is also relevant, as is underlined by the resurrection of Jesus. These issues receive attention below.

3. The Beginning of Salvation

In light of what has been said thus far, it is important to look at the beginning of the narrative, as the topic of salvation is immediately present here. The beginning of the Gospel is a reconfiguration of a prophetic discourse. Hos 1:2 LXX, ἀρχὴ λόγου κυρίου is reconfigured in Mark 1:1 as Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, which also reminds one of the beginning of Genesis (cf. Marcus 2000, 145). This means that the rest of the narrative is seen in line with the story of salvation going back to the Old Testament prophets. Verse 1 can then be taken as an indication of the content of the book as a whole and not only the first pericope. This single sentence (1:1–3) at the outset of the narrative supplies the reader with privileged information, while the characters in the narrative have to struggle to gain this insight (cf. Guelich 1989, 6–8; Matera 1999, 7f).

In Mark 1:2–3 we find the conflation of three passages from Exod 23:20; Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3, but being introduced as a quotation of Isaiah the prophet. The fact that this conflated citation, starting with Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1 and highlighting the preparation of the way of the Lord is ascribed to Isaiah, has special significance. If the εὐαγγέλιον of the coming of the Lord in Isa 40:9–10 is kept in mind, it becomes clear why this quotation in Mark 1:2–3 with its link to Isaiah can be seen as giving more content to what the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ entails (cf. Marcus 1992, 17–20).

The first quotation in Mark is from God Himself speaking of the messenger who has to prepare the way for Jesus. Mark's announcement on the good news could be understood to be referring to Isaiah's vision of a saving holy war. This entails a theocentric reading of the "way of the Lord" in 1:3, referring to "the triumphant march of the holy warrior, Yahweh, leading his people through the wilderness to their true homeland in a mighty demonstration of saving power" (Marcus 1992, 29.31). For Mark the fulfilment of this prophecy will take place in a paradoxical manner. Because the way of the Lord is Jesus' way, it is not the revolutionary struggle against Rome he is referring to, but rather Jesus' path of suffering and death in Jerusalem, which is the true fulfilment of the triumphant return of Yahweh to Zion according to Isaiah (Marcus 2000, 149).

In light of what has been said thus far, it is illuminating to compare the beginning of Mark to the beginning of Luke. After the Lukan prologue (1:1–4) the narrator describes Zechariah and Elizabeth, and then the action shifts to the Jerusalem temple from Luke 1:8 onwards. The narration continues with the experience of Zechariah where the angel Gabriel appears to him in the temple with a message. Gabriel's speech could be seen as a prophetic miracle discourse, as it "prophesies the miraculous effect of God's power in the bodies of Zechariah and Elizabeth, with the result that Elizabeth will bear the body of a special son" (Robbins 2005, 5).

There is a different flow of events in Mark. Here the discourse does not start with the angel Gabriel, but with the Word of God in the form of oral-scribal recitation of biblical discourse. According to Robbins, we have here an example of the prophetic discourse (2002, 17):

Rule: 2 Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way;
3 the voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."
Case: 4–6 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness . . .
Result: 7 And he preached saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I . . .
8 I have baptized with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In prophetic discourse material the basic *Rule* underlying the argumentation is that God chooses certain people to be responsible for the righteousness in his kingdom. The *Cases* are the individuals or

people chosen by God and the *Result* are the blessings bestowed on those who answer their calling, and woes inflicted on those who do not. Here, the oral-scribal recitation of the biblical discourse functions as the Rule for John, even as the Case and John's baptism of the people is the Result.

This prophetic discourse immediately focuses on Yahweh as King and the responsibility of the leaders of His kingdom. This is followed by the proclamation of John the Baptist in 1:4–8. He is already acting out his role as the forerunner who will be preparing for the intervention of God in Jesus. He immediately proclaims the coming of ὁ ἰσχυρότερος, who will baptise with the Holy Spirit (1:7–8). The announcement of the stronger one forms the turning point in the pericope and in the prologue as a whole. But as the forerunner of this mightier one, he starts preaching repentance of sins and inviting people to be baptised. The depiction of John the Baptist as well as the typical topics associated with Elijah and Elisha (cf. 1 Kgs 17:3; 19:3–18; 2 Kgs 2:4–14) in 1:5–6 have strong eschatological overtones. "The reader is left with the impression that a powerful action of God is taking place, one that expresses itself both in the baptism of myriads of people and in their being moved to confess their sins, which epitomizes their repentance" (Marcus 2000, 156). For Mark this baptism was only a proleptic cleansing from sins, since the true remission from sins would only result from the death of Jesus as a ransom for many (10:45). It is also important to see that according to Isa 40:5 the Glory of the Lord will be revealed, the Lord will come with might, his arm rules (Isa 40:10), and He will feed his flock like a shepherd (Isa 40:11).

As the reader already knows that Jesus has been announced as "the stronger one" (1:7), Mark 1:9–11 and 1:12–13 again provide information that is important to the process of salvation in Mark. The opening of the heavens is usually taken as a clear indication of the apocalyptic nature of this section (Lohmeyer 1963, 22). Although the splitting of the heavens clearly points in this direction, Robbins calls attention to the restraint in Mark's narration things that are uncharacteristic of the apocalyptic discourse (2002, 19). Here he sees another example of the merging of prophetic (descent of the Spirit) and apocalyptic discourses similar to *T. Levi* 18:6, where reference is made to a new priest who will function in a special way in the end time.

It is also noteworthy that Mark 1:11 is the first of only three occasions in Mark where direct communication takes place between God and Jesus: 1:11; 14:36 and 15:34. God addresses Jesus in 1:11, while in 14:36 and 15:34 it is Jesus addressing God. In 9:7, we find the only interaction between God and the disciples with the important statement: "This is my beloved Son, listen to Him". The address to Jesus in 1:11 is formulated in biblical language echoing Ps 2:7 (LXX), Isa 42:1 and with a possible allusion to Gen 22:2, 12, 16. Concerning the task of Jesus, the enabling presence of the Spirit on Jesus and His acclamation as Son of God by God is of great importance. But here there are no detailed statements commissioning Jesus to carry out his task (Robbins 1992b, 118.119):

> God is pleased with Jesus (Mark 1:11), God sanctions his activity (Mark 9:7), and God determines the final outcome of his activity. But God does not instruct him at every point like he does Abraham, Moses, and the prophets. Jesus knows what to do as a teacher who says and does the gospel of God . . . In Mark, Jesus' knowledge of the gospel of God allow him to take over Yahweh's role of calling, teaching, and commissioning.

Even though the reader knows from the beginning that Jesus is the Son of God, this is something that the centurion will only discover and confess at the end, yet "not even the reader fully comprehends what divine sonship fully entails in Mark's narrative universe" (Matera 1999, 9). What becomes clear in light of the use of Ps 2, is the fact that the kingship of Jesus as the Christ is congruent with that of God, and the evil rulers oppose both their kingships (Marcus 1992, 76; Marcus 2000, 166). The temptation in Mark 1:12–13, therefore, forms a logical sequence to what has been narrated.

4. Jesus' Encounter with Satan

In Mark 1:12–13 Jesus is tested by Satan in the wilderness. Although one could see a link to the Elijah-Elisha tradition in 1 Kgs 18:12; 2 Kgs 2:16, the primary biblical model is most probably Adam, who was at peace with the animals before the Fall (Marcus 2000, 169). There are probably other Old Testament echoes in the background of this account. It is remarkable that Mark does not state the outcome of the contest in clear words, though, it is implied immediately

afterwards in the proclamation of the coming of the kingdom by Jesus in 1:14f, as well as in the rest of the narrative in exorcisms, like those in 1:21–28.

Best has shown that if the connectivity of Mark as a narrative is taken seriously, 1:12f must be seen as the basis for the statement in 3:27 about the binding of the strong man. A rhetorical analysis shows that 3:27 is the rhetorical centre of 3:20–35. The change from Beelzebul in 3:22 to Satan in 3:23 also confirms the link with 1:12f. Best (1990, 12–13) states that:

> The conception of the binding of evil spirits is common in the apocalyptic writings. It presumably takes its Jewish origin [the idea also existed in Persian circles] in Isa. xxiv. 21f. and becomes more explicit in Tob. viii.3; I Enoch x.4f., 11f.; xviii.12–xix.2; xxi.1–6; liv.4f.; Test. Levi xviii.12; Jub. xlviii.15. It reappears in the New Testament in Rev. xx.2, where it is explicitly said that it is Satan who is bound . . . Christ has already bound Satan according to Mark iii.27; δήσῃ, aorist subjunctive, would suggest one definite act, and this must be the trial of strength which he had with Satan in the desert—the Temptation.

Robbins (2002, 24) describes how a prophetic discourse (where evil in the world is a result of human disobedience) is moved along through a miracle discourse and is combined with an apocalyptic discourse, where evil spirits have corrupted the good creation of God:

> Part of the Markan achievement is to intertwine exorcisms with apocalyptic *topoi* in a manner that moves the casting out of unclean spirits/demons beyond the worldviews of basic Mediterranean miracle discourse or biblical prophetic discourse into apocalyptic discourse.

The statement in 3:27 forms part of Jesus' response to the accusation of the scribes that He is possessed by Beelzebul, Satan, and casting out demons through the prince of the demons. Jesus' response is an apocalyptic argument, interweaving prophetic discourse (correcting the reasoning of those accusing Him) and wisdom discourse (making use of parables, enthymemes and contraries) in which three reasons are given for the assertion in verse 23 that Satan cannot cast out Satan. The first two reasons in 3:24–25 are wisdom reasoning based on a kingdom and a house. The third and conclusive reason in verse 26 presents an apocalyptic argument from the contrary point of view about Satan rising against himself and coming to an end. "The argument from the contrary, then, continues with

a counter-argument from analogy (*parabole*). By analogy, the strong man is Satan, and the one who enters the strong man's house is Jesus" (Robbins 2002, 26).

This could imply that the need for salvation in Mark is strongly bound to the presence of Satan. While in Luke, Satan remains active up to the final stages of the passion through Judas Iscariot and Peter (Luke 22:3, 31), it appears that the activity of Satan effectively disappears after Mark 1:12f. The tendency to see the whole of Mark as governed by a struggle between Jesus and Satan is not as prevalent as it used to be (Best 1990, xxiii). The only place where an impression is made of Satan directly opposing or testing Jesus is in 8:33. But Jesus' use of "Satan" in addressing Peter probably should be seen as a figure of speech with the implication: "Get behind me, you who oppose me!" (Evans 2001, 19). The rest of the verse corroborates this, where Jesus says that Peter is thinking human thoughts and not the things of God (or of Satan!). This is important for the theme of salvation, because it means that Mark's readers did not see Satan as the sole source of evil. Evil can be present in demon-possessed men (3:27) or in the world of nature (4:37f) and in sickness (1:43). But nowhere does Mark attribute moral evil, sin, to demon possession. The origin of sin is within man where evil thoughts have their origin (7:21–3). In this respect Best concludes that "we may say that for Mark evil may originate with Satan or in the human heart, thought not necessarily in the heart of the person who is subject to the temptation" (Best 1990, 43f). And while Satan is effectively written out of the story, because Mark has in fact transferred the defeat of Satan and the cosmic powers to the temptation in 1:11f, there still must be a final defeat in the End-time when all things will be made subject to God (Best 1990, xxiii).

5. The Coming of The Kingdom

Jesus' start to his ministry, where he announces the coming of the kingdom of God in Mark 1:15, could be seen as part of a traditional though redefined story of the Jewish people, of the expectation of the vindication of Israel by a saving covenant God. This implies that Israel would return from exile, that evil would be defeated, and that Yahweh would visit his people. This was no timeless message but actually a shocking claim (Wright 1996, 227).

We have dealt with the proclamation of John the Baptist in 1:4–8. He is already acting out his role as the forerunner who will be preparing for the intervention of God in Jesus. He immediately proclaims the coming of ὁ ἰσχυρότερος who will baptise with the Holy Spirit (1:7–8). But as the forerunner of this mightier one he starts preaching repentance of sins and invites people to be baptised.

The Deutero-Isaiah motif of an eschatological manifestation in the wilderness must also be put in the context of the expectations in Palestine and the Jewish revolt against Rome in 66–74. But, Mark gives his own content to it. The way through the wilderness should be understood primarily as the way the Lord will create for Himself, and only secondarily as denoting the human walk along that way. This can be linked to the important role of ὁδός in the central section of Mark 8:22–10:52. This means that the disciples are called to follow Jesus in his embodiment of the coming of the kingdom (Marcus 1992, 31f). It is also important to see that according to Isa 40:5 the glory of the Lord will be revealed, the Lord comes with might, his arm rules for him (Isa 40:10), and He tends his flock like a shepherd (40:11).

The coming of the kingdom also has to be seen in the context of eschatology and theology. This means that in its narrative the Gospel of Mark will be dealing with the claim of God's rule over the totality of those who are willing to follow Jesus on His way. This means that Mark begins with a prophetic discourse focusing on Yahweh as King and the responsibility of the leaders of His kingdom. This can be seen in the injunction to prepare the way of the Lord, and this will be fleshed out more fully later in Mark.

When Jesus proclaims the good news of the intervention of God, He is also challenging his audience to repentance and faith. In the context of the proclamation of the coming of the Lord in the desert, this is an appeal for a changed praxis, that Israel must conduct herself in a certain manner. According to Wright, the call to repent and believe should be understood in light of a passage in Josephus' *Life* 110 (LCL), to abandon their revolutionary zeal and to be loyal to Josephus. This is then an eschatological and political call and not simply an individualistic moral turning away from private sin (Wright 1996, 250). This is a radical challenge to Israel to abandon their way of being Israel and trust Jesus for his way. They are not expected to sacrifice, but to abandon their old way of life, and to trust Him for a new way of life (Wright 1996, 257).

In the Old Testament, an appeal to faith is often characteristic of a call to Israel in the hour of her distress (cf. Isa 7:9; 28:16; 30:15; Hab 2:4). In post-biblical Jewish writings a lack of faith is typical of those who are no longer members of Israel. In contrast, the true Israel has faith. Thus faith is a mark of the true Israel before the Lord; it is characteristic of Israel's restoration after the exile and is not just simply a reference to a religious interiority (Wright 1996, 261).

The process of spreading the message about the intervention of God in this manner is continued through Mark 1 with the calling of the first four disciples, and the narrative programme Jesus sets for Himself of making them fishers of men (1:17). After that, His teaching and healing ministry commences, and we hear in 1:38 that Jesus really came to preach, while the reader already knows that the content of this preaching is the kingdom of God. Mark 1 closes with the cleansing of the leper, who cannot remain silent about the intervention of God in his life and starts spreading the good news (1:45). At this stage it is clear that the preaching of the kingdom has transformative implications, transcending boundaries of geography and ethnicity (Blount 1998, 98).

These themes, stated at the beginning of Mark embody a range of issues. The kingdom connotes the rule of God, but also the present realm of blessings. The Kingdom also entails the gift of life and salvation. It is a comprehensive term for all that salvation includes. This can also be seen from Mark 10:17, 23–24, 30. When this is read together with 9:43, 45, 47, it can be concluded that eternal life, kingdom, and salvation function as synonyms in Mark (cf. Backhaus 1995, 106).

6. Jesus as Authoritative Teacher

It has been mentioned (2.2) that Jesus appears basically in three roles in the narrative, as wonder worker, proclaimer and saviour, with a close relationship existing between the first and third roles. His role as proclaimer is articulated in an important manner as the disciple-gathering teacher who plays a central role in Mark. It is interesting that the progression from Jesus' prophetic discourse in 1:14–15 to the casting out of the unclean spirit and the miracle discourse in 1:21–28 is a conventional progression in biblical literature. A close

parallel can be found in Elijah's prophetic announcement in 1 Kgs 17:1 followed by a miracle discourse in 1 Kgs 17:8–24, and climaxing in the widow's statement in 1 Kgs 17:24, that she now knows that the word of the Lord is true. Yet, the movement from the prophetic discourse directly into the calling of the four fishermen as disciple-companions in Mark 1:16–20 is unusual for biblical literature, although acceptable in the development of Mark's narrative.

It is important that Jesus' social identity is established in the initial phase of his ministry as a teacher gathering disciples and involving them as willing disciples and companions in his programme. Robbins has highlighted that neither the Hebrew Bible nor the LXX contain a teacher/disciple pattern, but that in varying degrees this pattern plays a role in the writings of Philo and Josephus (1992b, 100f). The teacher/disciple tradition in Mark can be seen as an independent adaptation of aspects of biblical and Greek traditions, but also not entirely parallel to the rabbinic tradition or Philostratus's *Vita Apollonii* (Robbins 1992b, 107). The heavenly sanction for the activity of Jesus has a strong Jewish background. But there are also important deviations underlining the autonomous nature of Jesus' activity as proclaimer and teacher. In contrast to the prophet, the teacher speaks the wisdom of God. Jesus preaches the kingdom of God without introducing it with, "thus says the Lord." It is clear that He teaches with authority (1:22) and that his miracle is seen as confirming his new and authoritative teaching (1:27) (Robbins 1992b, 119):

> Therefore, a basic dimension of the "messianic" nature of Jesus' activity in Mark arises from the adaptation of the autonomous stature of the teacher in Greco-Roman tradition and the subsequent importation of this emphasis on autonomy into Jewish tradition where God has been the dominant autonomous figure.

This identity of Jesus as an autonomous teacher is relevant to his role as Savour in Mark, as the authority of his prophetic discourse, moving into the miracle discourse, is closely related to other aspects of his salvific identity.

It is significant that after calling the first disciples, Jesus enters the synagogue in Capernaum, the heart of the provincial Jewish social order. This first miracle in Mark functions in the same manner as the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5–7, the Nazareth sermon in Luke 4, and the wedding feast at Cana in John 2:1–11. The

encounter with the man with the unclean spirit (1:23–26) is framed by the reference to the διδαχή and the ἐξουσία of Jesus in 1:22 and 27. What is emphasized here is Jesus' conflict on the Sabbath with the scribes, the religious authorities. There is a symbolic meaning involved in the exorcism. "This 'spirit' personifies scribal power, which holds sway over the hearts and minds of the people. Only after breaking the influence of this spirit is Jesus free to begin his compassionate ministry to the masses (1:29ff)" (Myers et al. 1996, 14). It must also be remembered that the victory was won in essence in the temptation account in 1:13f. Reference has been made to the contrast between ἀπόλλυμι and σῴζω, between life and death, salvation and damnation. The demon realizes that Jesus has power over life and death, and by his question whether He has come to destroy them (1:24) witnesses in this oblique manner to the saving power of Jesus. The irony is that it is the actor Satan who fills the role of ἀπόλλυων while Jesus as actor fulfils the role of σωτήρ. This is then further attested to by the healings, first in the private sphere of the home (1:29–31) and the public healings and exorcisms (1:32–34).

Marcus sees the exorcism as the inauguration of an eschatological holy war against demonic foes (2000, 195). When one takes into account that the decisive victory has been won in the desert (1:13), the continuing conflict is not less real, but one can also see the social and cultural dimensions in it (Myers 1996, 143).

7. Forgiveness of Sins, Fellowship with Sinners and Healings

After the programmatic exorcism in 1:21–28 and the subsequent healings, the healing of a paralytic in Mark 2:1–12 also deals with Jesus as saviour, in a narrower sense as healer and in a broader sense as the one who saves from sin. This pericope stands at the beginning of a section in which the conflict between the Jewish religious leaders and Jesus is being intensified. This conflict has been hinted at in the narrative on the man with the unclean spirit in the synagogue.

Two motifs are combined here, the healing of the paralytic and Jesus' authority as Son of man to forgive sins. The way in which Jesus links the forgiveness of sins (2:6) and the healing (2:11) underlines the fact that he wants to bring wholeness to the person and not just heal a physical illness. The elements of forgiveness and healing are

both integral to the ministry of Jesus and are evidence of the fact that God's salvation or wholeness had come (1:14–15) (cf. Gnilka 1978, 102; Guelich 1989, 95).

As only God can forgive sins (2:7), Jesus' claim to do this (2:5) is seen as blasphemy. Forgiveness of sins is part of the blessings of the Messianic age (cf. Isa 33:24; Mi 7:18–20; Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 18:31; 36:22–28; Zech 13:1). The forgiveness promised by John the Baptist in 1:4 is being realised through Jesus in his healing the paralytic and the pronouncement that his sins are forgiven. This is relevant for the issue of salvation in the broader sense too. Forgiveness of sins is another way of saying "return from exile" (cf. Jer 33:4–11; Ezek 36:24–6, 33; 37:21–3; Isa 40:1–2; 53:5–6, 11–12. This can be a private blessing, but it is not just a gift to an individual (Wright 1996, 268). Wright (1996, 272 his italics) states:

> The point is that *Jesus was offering the return from exile, the renewed covenant, the eschatological "forgiveness of sins"*—in other words, the kingdom of god. And he was offering this final eschatological blessing outside the official structures, to all the wrong people, and on his own authority. That was his real offence.

This means that the paralytic was experiencing his own "return" from exile in the healing of his paralysis and the forgiveness of his sins. It was to this scandalous redefinition of the kingdom itself that the Jewish religious leaders objected. But there is another reaction in this pericope that correlates with 1:22 and 27, which is the response of wonder and amazement as they experience the intervention of God and the breaking in of the kingdom of God. This response in wonder is not in faith and repentance (Dwyer 1996, 143). This amazement was often linked to confessions or questions concerning Jesus' identity and mission, as in 1:27; 2:12.

This offer of forgiveness of sins is now embodied in Mark 2:13–17, in the call of Levi, the tax collector and Jesus' eating with sinners and toll collectors. In the same manner that Jesus' healing provides more than only relief from bodily illness, his table fellowship with sinners embodies the forgiveness given in 2:5 to the paralytic. Each of these actions "depicted the gospel of God's activity in calling together a new people of the Kingdom, the promise of wholeness of the age of salvation and the forgiving reconciliation of God with his alienated people" (Guelich 1989, 106). This must be seen as a challenge to the existing familial and national symbolism by Jesus'

defining a new family of table-fellowship that is open to all. This is taken up again in 3:31. This word in 2:17, οὐκ ἦλθον καλέσαι δικαίους ἀλλὰ ἁμαρτωλούς, is one of two in Mark (cf. 10:45) specifically dealing with the mission of Jesus. The remark concerning the "righteous" must be understood ironically. Instead of propagating the separation from sin, which was the strategy of the Pharisees, Jesus is depicted in the image of God as the only true Healer (cf. Exod 15:26 "I am Yahweh your healer") often encountered in the Old Testament and Judaism. In taking on the mission of salvation for sinners and true healing, Jesus is taking on the role of Yahweh.

For this reason it is also important to note the relation between the miracles of Jesus and his works of power and salvation. This can be seen in the sandwich account of the healing of Jairus' daughter who is ill to the point of death and Jairus asks Jesus, ἐπιθῇς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῇ ἵνα σωθῇ καὶ ζήσῃ (5:23, cf. 5:28), and in Jesus' proclamation to the woman suffering from a flow of blood, ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε ὕπαγε εἰς εἰρήνην καὶ ἴσθι ὑγιὴς (5:34). This is the same announcement Jesus makes to the blind Bartimaeus in 10:52, Ὕπαγε, ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε.

This relationship underlines that the miracles of healing are important, but that they are not be seen as an end in itself. The miracles function to restore healed people, not only as individuals but also as members of the community, of Israel (cf. Ps 44:1–8; Isa 43:11; Hos 14:3). This can be seen as a fulfilment of Isa 35:1–2, 5–6, 10.

> 1 The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, 2 it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God.
> 5 Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
> 6 Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
> 9 But only the redeemed will walk there, 10 and the ransomed of the Lord will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

In this way, the healings become signs of the restoration of creation. The mighty works of Jesus were not only socially and religiously subversive. "They spoke, in the way that symbols can, of return and restoration, of the coming of YHWH to save and heal his people"

(Wright 1996, 429). What should not be overlooked is the fact that Mark, through his emphasis on ἔγειρε and ἀνέστη in 5:41f, wants his readers to link the girl's rescue from death with the resurrection of Jesus. This passage is a remarkable demonstration of the power and authority of Jesus as well as the extent of what salvation can entail.

8. Suffering, Death and Salvation

8.1. *Saving or Losing One's Life*

The link between salvation and life is emphasized in 5:23, and is underlined once more in 8:35–36. Salvation is the opposite of being lost, to die, to lose one's life. In 9:42–48, a contrast is drawn between entering life and entering Gehenna. We are dealing with a basic contrast between the victim and the beneficiary, a contrast between death and life, to kill/lose a life or to save a life (8:35). This contrast includes the following roles: ἀπολλύων—ἀπολλύμενος/σωζόμενος —σωτήρ. And the counterpart to the role of the protector, the σωτήρ, is ἀπολλύμενος—ἀπόλλυμαι—ἀπώλεια. In discussing the wonder narratives, it has also been seen that the role of ἀπολλύων has been realised by the actor Satan, and the role of the σωτήρ by the actor Jesus.

These verses are situated in the important central section of the Gospel (8:27–10:52), where the suffering-death discourse becomes the overarching mode of discourse. The theme of discipleship plays a central role in this section, which is framed by two healings of blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52). The disciples follow Jesus on the way to Jerusalem, yet they are unable to comprehend his repeated teaching on suffering and death. According to Feagin (1997):

> It is an irony of events that Jesus demonstrates his power to make the blind see, yet he cannot get his closest followers, the Twelve, to "see" what the journey to Jerusalem means for him or them. The frame material therefore reinforces the irony of faithfulness and failure.

The difficulties of living as Jesus' disciples are clearly seen in the life of the Twelve, and Mark's readers are given clear instructions on being a disciple. In 8:34–9:1, discipleship, following Jesus and salvation are linked in the context of the suffering-death discourse. The

interesting thing is that the link between salvation or losing one's life and discipleship is taken up again in 10:26–27, where the miracle discourse is being used (all things are possible with God 10:27), when the disciples ask in wonder, "Then who can be saved?" Καὶ τίς δύναται σωθῆναι (10:26).

In the pericope 8:34–9:1, a suffering-death discourse is introduced argumentatively in public, not only with Jesus' disciples but also with the crowds (8:34). Vernon Robbins has indicated that verses 36–37 present two *Rules* in an unusual manner, the one addressing the desire to save life (in the first part of the *Case*) and the other addressing the loss of life (in the second part of the *Case*). This means (Robbins 2002, 33):

> the Confirmatio in Mark 8:36–37 proceeds according to an argument "from the parts." Mark 8:36 presents a Rule that attempting to secure one's life by accumulating possessions results in throwing one's life away. Mark 8:37 presents a Rule that implies that a person has to give life over to a great cause, because it is impossible to buy it with anything.

When the argument is taken as a whole, its sequence can be reconstructed in the following manner: It begins with an inductive-deductive syllogism characteristic of early Christian wisdom discourse, consisting of a *Result/Case* followed by a *Rule/Rule*. This is then followed by an enthymematic argument with a conclusion. In an uncharacteristic manner the argument shifts from that which is characteristic of wisdom discourse to argumentation characteristic of apocalyptic discourse. In the context of the disciple being confronted with the possibility of losing or saving one's life, the pericope closes in 9:1 with the *Conclusion/Exhortation by Apocalyptic Rule*: And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power" (NRSV). According to Robbins (2002, 33):

[*Unstated Case:*	Those who honour the Son of Man]
Result:	will be saved by the power of the kingdom;
Case:	those who are ashamed of the Son of Man
Result:	will experience negative consequences from the power of the kingdom.

Jesus' call to discipleship and taking up the cross and following Him is therefore intimately bound with the motivation from the opposite consequences of saving one's life by losing it for the sake of Jesus

and the gospel. The reference in 8:35 to the gospel, the good news, recalls the beginning of the gospel and Mark 1:14–15, against the background of Second Isaiah. The kingdom of God, the time of salvation is at hand, and the salvation of humanity is bound up with this good news and following Jesus. The rationale for taking up the cross and following Jesus is the motivation stated in the opposites in 8:35, which is further confirmed in the paradox of the two Rules dealing with the desire to save one's life and the loss of life in 8:36–37. In the final conclusion, salvation is intimately bound to reaction to the honour/shame response to Jesus as the Son of man.

8.2. *Interpreting the Death of Jesus*

It is often said that the significance of the death of Jesus can be found in Mark only in 10:45 and 14:24. We have tried to trace the manner in which salvation is present in the narrative from the very beginning of Mark. But, especially in the last part of the narrative, starting from 8:27, it is important to pay close attention to the suffering and death of Jesus and its meaning as it increasingly occupies centre stage. There are different ways in which the suffering and death of Jesus could have been interpreted in light of the Old Testament, Jewish world and wider Hellenistic world. It should also be kept in mind that Mark presupposed a certain amount of knowledge that his readers already possessed. One could say that Mark actually offered his hearers a commentary on what they already knew.

From 8:27 on it is clear that Jesus gives himself voluntarily over to death (8:31; 9:31; 10:32–24). His death is also necessary and determined by God, 8:31 (δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν); it is also written in the Old Testament (9:12; 14:27b). In 8:31 and 14:21 these two lines coincide and can even be seen to be in tension in 14:35f. There are a number of texts where Jesus is depicted in terms of the Suffering Servant of the Lord from Isaiah, 9:12: he should suffer, (treated with contempt cf. Isa 53:3); 10:34: spit upon him (shame and spitting cf. Isa 50:6); 10:45: ransom for many (cf. offering for sin Isa 53:10ff); 14:24: my blood of the covenant, make many righteous (cf. Isa 53:11f); 14:61: He was silent, made no answer (cf. as a sheep is silent Isa 53:7); 14:65: spitting and slapping (cf. Isa 50:6); 15:27: crucified with him two robbers (cf. numbered with transgressors Isa 53:12). It should be noted that according to Kee, Mark provides no explanation for the suffering and death of Jesus, there

are no sure quotations from Isa 53, none of the distinctive language of the Suffering Servant can be detected and no explicit doctrine of atonement can be found (1975, 182–183).

8.3. *Mark 10:45*

As it is possible that Jesus may have seen himself in one or more of the roles of Righteous Sufferer, Son of God or Servant of the Lord, it is also possible that not only his death but also his life as a whole was seen to hold salvific significance for the community of believers. Especially in the teaching of the disciples in 8:27–10:45 Jesus could be seen as a model for the disciples, yet the striking differences should also be acknowledged. Jesus fulfils a unique position and certain things happen only to Him. His death must also be seen as completely different from that of any believer. This is emphasized by the strategically placed position of the important λύτρον saying in 10:45, the last saying of Jesus before entering Jerusalem and the commencement of the actual passion narrative (Best 1990, l.liv). Our concern here is not whether this logion can be traced to the historical Jesus (cf. Best 1990, liv; Combrink 1968), but the way it functions in Mark's narrative. In Mark 10:35–45, the ransom saying is the climax in the context of Jesus' teaching on service, but now with a particular slant to the content of the service by Jesus. But it is precisely the presence of 10:45b, the λύτρον word, which prevents us from interpreting the saying about Jesus' service as being only exemplary. In the past the discussion has often centred on whether the background to this saying could be found in the Suffering Servant of Isa 53. Although the arguments of Barrett (1959) and Hooker (1959) against a direct link to Isa 53 are acknowledged, it is difficult to deny an indirect influence of Isa 53, and Hooker admits that "the theology of Isaiah 40–55 as a whole is certainly an important part of its background" (1991, 249). It is true that the word "ransom" (λύτρον) has no direct relation to Isa 53. It carries the meaning of "means of liberation", "death on cross as ransom", and can be compared with ἀντίλυτρον in 1 Tim 2:6 (Louw & Nida 1989, 37.130). It is located in the semantic domain dealing with "release, set free". It implies the thematic role λυτρωτής—λυτροῦμαι—λύτρωσις as deliverer, redeemer (cf. Luke 24:21; 1:68; 2:38; Heb 9:12; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 1:18). According to Davidsen, it is hyposynonomous with the role λυτήρ—λύω—λύσις as releaser,

liberator (cf. Matt 16:19; 18:18; Rev 1:5), and λύσις as release, liberation, payment of debt, release from guilt. The closely related term ἀντάλλζγμα in Mark 8:37 is parasynonomous with ἀντίλυτρον, ἄλλαγμα (LXX Isa 43:3) and with λύτρον (Davidsen 1993, 313). The means of exchange is of importance, what one receives or gives in return, as a ransom. The background of the Maccabean martyrs could also be important, as can be illustrated by the close verbal links with, for example, ἀντίψυχον αὐτῶν λαβὲ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχήν in 4 Macc 6:29.

It can be shown that there is an apocalyptic eschatology growing from the experience of martyrdom. In the Psalms of the Righteous Sufferer someone is suffering in spite of his righteousness and he calls on God to vindicate him in his life. But, in apocalyptic texts the martyr suffers as a result of righteousness but will be glorified at the eschaton (Ruppert 1972, 23–24). This is also the case in post biblical Judaism, as well as in Qumran literature. Therefore, another option is to view Jesus' death as that of a martyr who could inspire believers with determination and love when facing death. But this is surely not the only significance of the death of Jesus in Mark. Did Jesus die as a Jewish martyr like the Maccabeans? They died for the cause of their group. When the noble death of Eleazar in 2 Macc 6:31 is compared with the deaths of his brothers, Seeley states that the death of his brothers are not vicarious, as was the case with Eleazar. His death is of benefit to all of his contemporary fellow-citizens, and it benefits even the reading audience. In 2 Maccabees the elements of vicariousness, obedience, a military context, overcoming physical vulnerability constitute what could be termed a noble death. In 4 Maccabees the same four aspects just mentioned are present, but much more explicit than in 2 Maccabees. Now the military context is much harsher and more savage. But the mode of being vicarious is still fundamentally mimetic as is the case in 2 Maccabees. The author uses the vicariousness of the deaths of the martyrs as examples to be followed by the audience (Seeley 1990, 147).

But there may also be a link between Mark 10:45 and Isa 43:3–4, where the idea of God as "Saviour" is present as well as the idea of "ransom", "in exchange for" and "life" (cf. Evans 2001, 122f). ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὁ ἅγιος Ἰσραὴλ ὁ σῴζων σε ἐποίησά σου ἄλλαγμα ὑπὲρ σοῦ καὶ δώσω ἀνθρώπους πολλοὺς ὑπὲρ σοῦ.

Although there are doubts about whether the links between Mark 10:45 and Isa 43:3–4 can really be made, Isa 43 may nevertheless

also be part of the background from which the formulation of the mission, message, and understanding of Jesus could have stemmed (Evans 2001, 123). It is significant that Best emphasizes that the idea that God gave up Christ for the atonement of our sins was part of the understanding of the death of Jesus from a period much earlier than Mark and can be assumed to be part of the heritage of the early Christians. Whether the idea originated from Isa 53, Isa 43, or the Maccabean martyrs, whether the views on the atoning death of Jesus is traceable to the Palestinian or the Hellenistic church, is not the issue. "What is important is that Mark and his readers will have been able to understand Jesus' death as one that atoned, i.e. dealt with sin" (Best, lvii). Yet, there are differences between Jesus and the figure of the Righteous Sufferer. Jesus died alone, without support, probably as a religious revolutionary, and not as a martyr. His teaching on discipleship in 8:27–10:46 is also not related to martyrdom. The Righteous Sufferer does not give his life as ransom (cf. 10:45), he does not pour out his blood for many (cf. 14:24), he does not return in judgment (cf. 14:62), but he dies trusting in God in contrast to Jesus in 15:34 (Best 1990, xlix).

With reference to the atoning value of the suffering and death of Jesus, the cup of suffering that Jesus has to drink (10:38; 14:36) must be interpreted in light of the Old Testament and Jewish background as a cup of judgment (cf. Ps 75:9; Isa 52:17–23; Jer 25:15–29; Ezek 23:31–34; Pss. Sol. 8:14; 1QpHab 11:10–15). This cup can be taken to be vicarious (Gnilka 1979, 101f). This can be seen from the context in 10:38 (cf. 10:45) and 14:36 with reference to 14:24. It is noteworthy that both the explicit soteriological references (10:45 and 14:24) can be found in contextual and motive-wise proximity to the metaphor of the cup of suffering. It is, therefore, not necessary to interpret the final words of 10.45 "as alien to the context (or to the rest of Mark's gospel) as is often argued, and that there is an inner logic which holds together the ideas of the Son of man, service, the giving of one's life, and a ransom" (Hooker 1991, 251).

8.4. *Mark 14:24, 27*

Jesus' symbolic action in the upper room in Mark 14:22–25 should be seen as some kind of Passover meal. It signifies that Yahweh returns to redeem his people and to grant them forgiveness of sins. But this will take place in and through Jesus Himself. Jesus distinguishes

the Last Supper from the Passover. It also gains in meaning in light of his action in the temple in Mark 11. Jesus as the Messiah acts in a symbolic manner like certain Old Testament prophets (Jeremiah, Ezekiel) to symbolize the new exodus, the arrival of the kingdom through his death (Wright 1996, 558f). But Jesus adds words to his symbolic action. He identifies the bread with his body, and the cup (not the "wine" as could be expected) with his blood. The phrase "my blood of the covenant" echoes Exod 24:1–8, especially verse 8, and defines Jesus' death on the cross as a covenantal death. It is an event that is framed by the exchange structure of the covenant when Jesus dies in obedience to the Lord of the covenant, cf. 8:33 (Davidsen 1993, 245). But the blood of covenant also recalls Zech 9:9–11. Zech 9:11 NIV:

> As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
> I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit.

There are a number of allusions to Zech 9–14 in Mark 14:24–28, the most obvious of which is the quotation from Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27. There are also echoes of Zech 9:9–10 in Mark 11:1–11, again underlining the links between Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and his actions in the temple, and the last supper (Marcus 1992, 157).

More links can be pointed out, such as καινόν in 14:25, which reminds one of the new covenant of Jer 31 (LXX 38):31, and also anticipates the restoration of fallen Israel. The language of τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν recalls the language of sacrificial atonement in Isa 53:12. "The pouring out of his blood takes on sacrificial and atoning connotations, which Jesus has linked to the covenant of the kingdom" (Evans 2001, 394).

As far as these allusions to Zech 9–14 in Mark 14:22–28 are concerned, Joel Marcus has made a strong case that they could have been read in a contrasting manner to the expectation of the Jewish revolutionaries in the time of the origin of the Gospel of Mark. In a paradoxical way the Messiah was seen not as entering Jerusalem in a triumphant fashion, but being delivered to his enemies on the Mount of Olives, being killed by the Gentiles in Jerusalem and his death being accompanied by a proleptic destruction of the Temple (15:38) (Marcus 1992, 160f).

8.5. *The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus*

The background of the Righteous Sufferer of the Psalms has been mentioned already. A number of these allusions are found in Mark's passion narrative in Mark 14–16, and are concentrated in the crucifixion account of Mark 15. Such allusions can be found in the dividing of the garments 15:24 (Ps 22:18 [LXX 21:19]); the mocking and shaking of heads (15:29; Ps 22:7); the demand that Jesus save Himself (15:30–32; Ps 22:8); the derision in 15:32 (Ps 22:6); the cry of dereliction in 15:34 (Ps 22:1); the vinegar to drink (15:36; Ps 69:21); the women at a distance in 15:40 (Ps 38:11) (cf. Marcus 1992, 174f). Marcus makes the following important remark in this respect: "It is fair to say, then, that Ps 22 and other Psalms of the Righteous Sufferer are often interpreted in the postbiblical period as references to eschatological events, and we would present it as a working hypothesis that these psalms bring a similar eschatological context along with them in Mark" (1992, 179). Marcus argues that Old Testament quotations in Mark often imply the larger context of the Old Testament texts (1992, 180). Gese is of the opinion that not only is the innocent suffering of the righteous important, but that vindication is also implied. This is then relevant in the way in which Ps 22 is used in the account of the crucifixion of Jesus (1974, 192–196). It is also important that the idea of the kingship of Yahweh is framing Ps 22 (21 LXX) in verses 3 and 29, τοῦ κυρίου ἡ βασιλεία. It also implies the resurrection of the dead in Ps 22:29. "Understood against this background, the psalm is used in the passion narratives not only to provide Old Testament background for Jesus' suffering but also to hint at a deliverance from death that is the revelation of the kingdom of God to all, including the Gentiles" (Marcus 1992, 180). It is also noteworthy that references from Ps 22 in Mark 15:24, 29, 34 are interwoven with references to Jesus as the King of the Jews in Mark 15:18, 26, 32 and the royal title Son of God in 15:39.

There is also an interweaving of allusions to the Righteous Sufferer from the Psalms and the Suffering Servant from Isaiah in Mark 14–15. The Suffering Servant adds to the picture of the Righteous Sufferer, where in the Psalms the order is first suffering as result of the enemies and then victory through the power of God. "Although this sequence is not totally absent from Isa 52:13–53:12 (see, e.g., 52:13; 53:10–12), it is mixed in with the idea that *already in his suffering*

the Servant accomplishes a salvific purpose and thus wins an eschatological victory" (Marcus 1992, 194). This modifies the pattern of the Psalms of divine victory as defeat of the nations. In Isaiah, the triumph of the Servant is his dying on behalf of the nations as well as his own people.

Attention has already been given to the role of Ps 22 in relation to the role of the Righteous Sufferer. In the narrative of the crucifixion another interesting aspect of the background of suffering and death can be seen: the reconfiguration of Ps 22 in Mark 15 is also being reconfigured by the cultural intertexture of the humiliated, righteous king. Firstly, recontextualisation (with no indication that these words can be found elsewhere in a text) is found in Mark 15:24 where Ps 22:18 (LXX 21:19), about the dividing of his garments and the casting of the lot is being recontextualised. The second example is found in Mark 15:25–32, where the language from Ps 22:6–8 forms an expanded *chreia* and is applied to the context of the taunting of Jesus. Here, the words from Ps 22:7 and 8 about the mocking and shaking of heads and the taunt to save are recontextualised in Mark 15:29–30, with 15:31 elaborating on the taunt about not saving himself. In 15:32, the despising (ὠνείδιζον) of Ps 22:6 (LXX 21:7) (ὄνειδος) is picked up too. Finally, Ps 22:1 (*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani*) is recontextualised as speech of Jesus himself in Mark 15:34. The remarkable thing is that the Markan account presents the material from Ps 22 in reverse order (cf. 15:24, Ps 22:28; 15:30–31, Ps 22:6–8; 15:34, Ps 22:1). In this way the rhetoric of the Psalm is reversed (Robbins 1992a, 1178–1181). In the beginning of Ps 22 the sufferer cries out in alienation, and then experiences the mockery and humiliation of nakedness, while at the end, confidence in God is expressed. In Mark 15:24, the humiliation of Jesus' nakedness is recounted, this is followed by the taunting in 15:30–32, and ends with Jesus' cry of dereliction and alienation in 15:34. "Language in a psalm that moved from alienation through agony to an expression of confidence has been reconfigured into a crucifixion account that moves from agony to alienation to death" (Robbins 1996).

This recontextualisation of Ps 22 must also be interpreted in the context of the broader cultural intertexture where the echoes of other traditions may also be relevant. Robbins draws attention to the important implications of the role of Jesus as teacher in Mark. Attention has already been given to the role of the tradition of Righteous Sufferer (cf. Nickelsburg 1980). Just as important is the tradition of

the rejected prophet (Kee 1977, 117f). But here in Mark 15:26, 32, the concept of kingship emerges again in a significant manner (cf. Matera 1982). To interpret the full picture of Jesus as teacher, prophet, Righteous Sufferer, suffering king, Robbins reminds us of the Greco-Roman tradition of the suffering and dying king who voluntarily dies for the benefit of his own people (1992b, 187f). He then points out the close relation between the crucifixion scene in Mark and the description in Dio Chrysostom, *Discourses* 4.67.69, where the Persian ritual in the Sacian festival consists of the humiliation of a prisoner by first mockingly honouring him as king and then stripping, scourging and hanging him. The remarkable thing is that in this example of cultural intertexture, Mark 15 follows the sequence of the text of Dio Chrysostom that follows an inverse order of the scenes in Ps 22. In this manner, the cultural intertexture actually reconfigures the Jewish and Hellenistic-Roman tradition. "This Markan discourse is a distinctive formulation that challenges other Mediterranean portrayals of a personage who lives an exemplary life and dies an exemplary death for the benefit of humans" (Robbins 1996, 62).

The taunting to Jesus to "save yourself" is full of irony and in a sense comes very close to containing the heart of the message of Mark. The logic of the mockers is clear: if Jesus claims such power over the temple, he must be able to save his own life. But this leaves Mark 8:35 out of consideration. Jesus is able to save others precisely because He dies (Feagin 1997, 130). This is the culmination of irony in the narrative that the enemies of Jesus ignorantly speak the core truth of the gospel (Hurtado 1989, 267). Jesus is King, not in spite of, but because He loses his life for others.

The reality of the salvation by the death of Jesus is then testified to by the rending of the curtain in the temple and the confession by the centurion that Jesus is truly the Son of God (15:38–39). Mark does not interpret these events. Yet, in light of the criticism of the temple earlier in the narrative (11:12–21), as well as 13:2; 14:58 and 15:29, it can be assumed that the rending of the curtain is to be seen as a sign of the future destruction of the temple and the temple cult (Hooker 1991, 377f). According to Hamerton-Kelly, the message is: "the holy of holies has been exposed to public view, its mystery has been removed; the system has been demystified and so deprived of the efficacy that depended on its operating behind a veil" (1994, 57). The positive side of this is that the way is now open for others

to enter into the community of God's people. Now even Gentiles can enter. This is illustrated by the next verse where the Gentile centurion confesses that not the Caesar, but Jesus is the Son of God. This links again to the beginning of the narrative (1:11), where God Himself declares at Jesus' baptism that He is his beloved Son.

9. Conclusion

9.1. *Salvation as Event*

Throughout this contribution the emphasis has fallen on the fact that the topic of salvation is present in the narrative of Mark in its entirety, and not just where the terms σῴζω, σωτήρ or σωτηρία are used. The basic semantic components of salvation as event can be formulated as follows: a person intervenes in a situation where someone else is in a distressful situation with the result that the distress is relieved.

Mark begins by relating Jesus' way of salvation as the way of Yahweh with his people, but this is a path of suffering and death and not a victorious way through the wilderness. Salvation is also defined as the coming of the kingdom of God, which implies that Israel would return from exile, that evil would be defeated, and that Yahweh would visit his people. This means that Mark begins his gospel with a prophetic discourse focusing on Yahweh as King and the responsibility of the leaders of His kingdom. Very early in the narrative (1:12f), Jesus encounters Satan in the wilderness and an important victory is implied by 3:27. The cleansing of the leper in 1:40–45 implies that salvation as healing has transformative implications that transcend the boundaries of geography and ethnicity. This implies a redrawing of the boundaries and Israel's maps of purity. In 7:19, Jesus overturns dietary regulations as a whole and declares all foods clean (deSilva 2000, 282). The healing of a paralytic in Mark 2:1–12 also defines salvation in a narrower sense as healing, as well as in a broader sense as salvation from sin. The forgiveness of sins is further made concrete in the call of Levi, the tax collector, and Jesus' eating with sinners and toll collectors in Mark 2:13–17.

From 8:27, the suffering-death discourse becomes dominant. Despite the claim that the salvific significance of the suffering and death of

Jesus can only be deduced from 10:45 and 14:24, the Old Testament, Jewish, and Greco-Roman oral-scribal and cultural intertexture, which is richly present in the extended passion narrative shows that Jesus is able to save others precisely because He dies. Jesus is King, not in spite of, but because He loses his life for others.

The social and cultural implications of the manner of Jesus' death are also important. The claim of a crucified Messiah would be shameful and repulsive to Jewish ears. Yet, the reader of Mark understands the death of Jesus as a noble death despite the ignorance of so many and their inability to accept it as such, but also as a sacrifice (deSilva 2000, 53.307). This means that the Gospel of Mark narrates salvation as an event of healing, liberation from sickness and sin, the transcending of various kinds of boundaries and the constituting of new relationships. This entails a process of progression, but in an overarching manner, the protection of life from the threat of death (cf. Davidsen 1993, 62).

9.2. *Agent of Salvation*

The narrative Jesus appears basically in the roles of wonder worker, proclaimer and saviour. The manner in which the Gospel of Mark begins with a series of Old Testament quotations sheds remarkable light on the role of Jesus in Mark. In a theocentric reading of Mark 1:3f, Marcus identifies the triumphant return of Yahweh, returning to the holy land in an act of saving power, with Jesus' way and his journey to his death and resurrection in Jerusalem (1992, 29.31.46f). This means that Jesus' adult life and death is the continuation of a redemptive story that began during the time of the prophets. Mark therefore begins with the good news that Yahweh Himself is the agent of salvation. In terms of common social and cultural topics, this means that He is depicted as Benefactor who has kept faith with Israel (deSilva 2000, 128).

In fulfilling his calling (cf. 1:11), in the healings Jesus takes on the role of σωτήρ, as wonderworker. This is related to the narrative role of the protector who saves someone from something that threatens. Jesus also acts as the mediator and broker of God's favour (2:7). The role of protector implies a beneficiary or a victim. The thematic victim roles are portrayed by the sick, the possessed and the flock (14:72; cf. Mark 2:17): "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

In the role as Saviour, Jesus provides salvation in a narrower sense as healing and in a broader sense as salvation from sin.

Underlining his role as teacher can shed some light on the narrative role of Jesus as proclaimer. The social identity of Jesus as a teacher is established by his gathering disciples and involving them as willing disciples and companions in his programme. There is a strong Jewish background for Jesus as proclaimer. But there are also important deviations due to the Greco-Roman cultural intertexture, especially with reference to the autonomous nature of Jesus' activity as proclaimer and teacher. He acts with authority and his miracles confirm his authoritative teaching.

9.3. *Need for Salvation*

We have seen that the σωτήρ as protector has a counterpart, which can be seen in the narrative role of ἀπολλύμενος—ἀπόλλυμαι—ἀπώλεια. This is implied in various ways in the course of the narrative. One can begin by looking at the religious authorities functioning as a single character in the narrative and as an opponent of Jesus. The conflict with the Jewish leaders often provides dramatic irony, when the readers recognise the presence of the kingdom of God in Jesus but the Jewish leaders, in their blindness, reject Jesus and ascribe his actions to Satan (Feagin 1997, 203). When Jesus brings salvation, it is also salvation from power structures imposing their authority by "sacred violence" and scapegoats. The sandwich structure of the cleansing of the temple (11:15–19), framed by the cursing of the fig tree (11:12–14), and the withered fig tree (11:20f) underlines that the sacrificial system is like a barren fig tree and is coming to an end (Hamerton-Kelly 1994, 17). The abuses of the temple by the priests lead to Jesus' symbolic announcement, and eventually to the rending of the curtain in the holy place as the desacralisation of space, in preparation for its destruction (deSilva 2000, 291f).

In discussing the first miracle, the encounter with the man with the unclean spirit (1:23–26), the symbolic meaning involved in the exorcism has been underlined. We have seen that the 'spirit' personifies scribal power over the hearts and minds of the people, and that Jesus could only continue his salvific activity after breaking the influence of this spirit. But in 3:27 it is implied that the victory was in essence achieved in the confrontation between Jesus and Satan in

the temptation account in 1:13f (Best 1990, xviii; Robbins 2002, 26f). It is Satan who fills the role of ἀπόλλυων while Jesus as actor fulfils the role of σωτήρ. Best underlines that Mark's primary concern and the greater achievement of Jesus is the redemption of men from sin, rather than the cosmic defeat of Satan (1990, 189).

9.4. *Result of Salvation*

The result of salvation, of the distress relieved, can take a positive or a negative form. The positive form of salvation can also be distinguished as provisional and definite salvation. Provisional salvation is a factual change in the body (cf. 5:34; 10:52) and consists in a change or preservation of being. It consists in healing, the neutralising of an ongoing destruction process. One could ask whether Jairus' daughter is given eternal life, or whether the destruction of the body is only delayed? The healing by Jesus entails salvation within the framework of fatal death. "Death can be resisted, but it is far from being overcome: the salvation is *provisional*" (Davidsen 1993, 224).

Definitive salvation is salvation to eternal life. This form of salvation implies a transitive act, a doing by someone else than he who is saved, which changes and/or preserves a state of being. The transitive aspect is evident in 10:45 and 14:24, also in 15:29, 31, Ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι. When the resurrection is seen as salvation by God, Jesus is saved by God and not by Himself. Jesus cannot save Himself, as He cannot raise Himself (cf. Davidsen 1993, 226). Yet, by dying willingly on the cross He plays a role in the process leading to his resurrection.

The question of the rich man, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (10:17), is basically the question of 10:26, "Then who can be saved?" This discussion leads to the statement that although it is impossible with men, all things are possible with God (10:27). This is the language of the miracle discourse. But a disciple must also take up his cross and follow Jesus (8:34). That means she must follow Jesus unto death and drink the cup and being baptized with his baptism (10:38).

The basic result of salvation can be seen as a process of progression, but in an overarching manner it is the protection of life from the threat of death. This becomes evident in the way in which the disciples follow Jesus on his way to the cross, and ironically, time and again fail to understand his teaching. And yet, the incomprehension

of the disciples is not final. This is suggested by the open ending of Mark in 16:7. The main section of Mark 8–10 is also framed by two healings of blind men, suggesting that true discipleship will eventually entail the ability to see. The centurion (15:39) then becomes a prototype of someone who can see and then confesses.

The salvation is also a challenge to the existing familial and national symbolism. By his words and deeds Jesus is defining a new family that is open to all. This is seen in the open table-fellowship of Mark 2:13–17. But the new community of Mark also knows the reality of opposition for the sake of Jesus (13:12f). Despite the reality of dishonour, rejection and shame by outsiders, they can be assured of salvation (13:20). Despite the shame and censure by enemies and outsiders, they can be assured of being honoured by the Son of man in the kingdom of God (8:34–9:1). The real honour (10:37) can only be obtained in serving (10:43–45). This is also part of the fitting response of a beneficiary to his Benefactor (deSilva 2000, 141).

Finally, it is interesting to note the manner in which different kinds of early Christian discourses also embody what has been pointed out already, be it from a different perspective. Mark begins his Gospel with a reconfiguration of prophetic discourse. In a prophetic discourse, the primary Rule would reflect the decision of God, as agent of salvation, to select certain people to execute his will in the human realm, in other words, the story of God's people. The Case comprises of the individuals chosen (John the Baptist, Jesus) to enact this, and the Result would be the baptism of the people as a preparation for Him who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. In 1:1–20, Mark also introduces apocalyptic *topoi*, evoking the expectations of the activity of God at the end time (Robbins 2002, 16.20). But instead of the apocalyptic discourse becoming the dominant discourse in Mark, we find an interweaving of apocalyptic, wisdom, miracle, prophetic and suffering-death discourses, which helps the reader to appreciate the varied manner in which the process of salvation is narrated in this Gospel.

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CHAPTER THREE

SOTERIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES IN LUKE'S GOSPEL

Gert J. Steyn
University of Pretoria

1. Introduction

Luke's writings are characterized by a special emphasis on salvation, not to be found in Mark and Matthew (Marshall 1998; Malan 1989, 11; Voss 1965, 45); it is a major unifying theme throughout the entire work of Luke (Richard 1990, 29; Richard 1983; Dömer 1978; Büchele 1978). According to Luke-Acts, God's purpose ultimately is one of universal salvation (Tannehill 1986, 3). From the outset, Luke adopts a soteriological tone—particularly at the beginning of his Gospel in the *Sondergut Lukas* (SLk) material. This soteriological tone sets the frame and context within which the story of Jesus is told and within which Luke incorporates and reinterprets the material from his sources. Luke's theology is firmly based on the traditions he inherited. In fact, a considerable part of Luke's soteriology was not developed by him, but was largely taken over from his sources (Marshall 1984, 92ff).

The person of Jesus, as well as his activity, is the central character in Luke's Gospel and it continues to be so in Acts, because "there is salvation in no one else" (Acts 4:12) (Sweetland 1990, 49).[1] No wonder Conzelmann (1964) terms Jesus' ministry "Die Mitte der Zeit" of God's salvation history.[2] Some would even say that Jesus was not the centre, but the climax of God's salvation history (Sweetland 1990, 56). It is a story of Jesus' birth, life and death, which, after these events had been carefully investigated (Luke 1:1–4), is being

[1] Marshall (1984, 92ff) also points to Van Unnik who regards the purpose of the Gospel to be indicating the saving activity of Jesus.

[2] Supported by Fitzmyer (1970, 18), but the viewpoint remains controversial. Various modified versions of Conzelmann's three-stage model have been put forward. Others have adopted a two-stage model of salvation history (e.g. Robinson—referred to by Rese 1985, 2306) within a prophecy-fulfilment scheme.

retold with a definite Christological and soteriological intent (Fitzmyer 1981, 219). It is thus a Christological story, cloaked in soteriological robe. Salvation "is the central motif in Lucan theology" (Marshall 1984, 92–93) and supplies the key to his theology (Fitzmyer 1981, 18). Luke's history too, can thus justifiably be called a "salvation history", and is supported by the soteriological terms and expressions used in his writings (Fitzmyer 1981, 20).

At the same time though, Luke's soteriological emphasis differs largely from that of Mark and particularly so from that of Paul. In fact, a list of models of soteriology could be identified in the NT (McIntyre 1992, 26–52). It has been pointed out that Luke has no "story of the Cross" (Fitzmyer 1981, 219; Larkin 1977, 326; Conzelmann 1964).[3] Scholars have searched in vain for sayings about the atonement power of Jesus' death (Schnackenburg 1976). With the exception of one instance in Luke's Gospel (Luke 22:19), the ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν formulae do not appear in the rest of the Gospel. No direct soteriological significance is drawn from Jesus' suffering or death (Fitzmyer 1981, 219; Cadbury 1958, 280–282; Talbert 1966, 71–82). His death is not the *cause* for salvation, but serves rather as an *example* of salvation (Zehnle 1969, 420–444). Wilckens even goes so far (too far?) as to state that "Der Tod Jesu hat keine Heilsbedeutung, und damit fehlt der lukanischen Christologie überhaupt jede inhaltliche Soteriologie" (1961, 216). The real question is thus whether God is depicted as bringing his salvific plan into realization *despite* Jesus' suffering and death, or whether in the Lucan story it is achieved *through* Jesus' suffering and death (Baumbach 1972, 242; Fitzmyer 1981, 220). It would thus be inappropriate to begin an analysis of the soteriological terms in Luke "with the understanding of the end achieved rather than with the mode of its achievement . . . to start with the outcome, i.e. with the result of the death on the cross, and to work backwards to the terminology employed in speaking of it" as suggested by Marrow (1990, 277.280)—because in Luke the situation is different to that in Paul. Vielhauer (1950/51, 1–15) even suggests that Luke's Christology is pre-Pauline, but that his natural theology, eschatology and viewpoint on the law are post-Pauline (cf. discussion by Rese 1985, 2300).

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[3] Sweetland believes there is a shift in scholarship which accepts that Luke does have a theology of the cross and that salvation is available in the present and not in the future (1990, 57).

In order to get a clearer picture of Luke's soteriological vesture, the various layers ought to be taken off by means of asking certain questions: (a) Which *terminology* does Luke use to compose his soteriology? (b) Where in his work are soteriological terms and expressions used? In what *context* are they deployed? (c) Where did he get these expressions from? What *sources* were used and what is the sociohistorical background of the expressions used? (d) How are these expressions used or deployed in his work? What is their *function* and how are they (re)interpreted by Luke?

2. Terminology: Frequency and Occurrence

According to the Computer-Konkordanz (1980), the word group σῴζειν-σωτηρία-σωτήρ appears frequently in Luke-Acts (47x—25x in the Gospel and 22x in Acts). Four words are used: the nouns σωτήρ (*savior*), σωτηρία (*salvation*), σωτήριον (*salvation*), and the verb σῴζειν (*to save*). The nouns Σωτήρ and σωτηρία do not appear in the other synoptic gospels (Navonne 1970, 141). In fact, these nouns are almost exclusively deployed at the beginning of the Gospel, in the nativity stories, which represent SLk material.

- Σωτήρ is used 24x in the NT: 16x referring to Jesus and 8x referring to the Father (Ryken 2000; Moehlmann 1920, 19). The term is not unknown in the OT, and is applied to God, who is called σωτήρ (e.g. Isa 45:21–22; Mic 7:7; Hab 3:18. Cf. also Scheffler 1991, 78). Among the Synoptics, it is only used by Luke, who uses it to refer to God, as well as to Jesus. In Luke's Gospel the term is used by Mary, who rejoiced in God her saviour in the OT reference (Luke 1:47), and by the angels who proclaimed the birth of a saviour to the shepherds (Luke 2:11). In Acts it is used by Peter and the apostles, who preach that God raised Jesus to be a leader (ἀρχηγός) and a saviour (Acts 5:31), and by Paul, who preaches that God had kept his promise and raised Jesus, a saviour (Acts 13:23). The occurrences in Luke 2:11 (present tense) and Acts 13:23 (past tense) refer to the historical person. In Acts 5:31 (present tense), reference is made to the exalted Jesus (Throckmorton 1973, 516). The study by Moehlmann (1920, 20) indicates that "the earlier strata of the NT do not at all contain the term σωτήρ whether with literal or technical significance." Jesus

never used the term in respect of himself (Taylor 1953, 107), nor was it applied to Jesus from the beginning of Christianity. Furthermore, it hardly occurs as a title in any of the Christian documents prior to 80 AD (Moehlmann 1920, 2). The occurrences mentioned above in Luke 2:11; Acts 5:31; 13:23, as well as the occurrence in Phil 3:20 (Jesus being awaited in heaven as saviour—future), represent the complete group of instances in the NT[4] where σωτήρ is used as a descriptive term—always in the indefinite and always accompanied by another term—its background rooted in Jewish messianism. The three occurrences of σωτήρ in the Lucan literature thus represent the earliest Christian application of the term to Jesus. The term as a definite title, only enters Christian literature during the time of the Pastoral Epistles (Moehlmann 1920, 20). In the final stage of its development by early Christianity, its usage as name for Jesus would not occur until the time of the Odes of Solomon (ca 100 AD). One explanation for the rather sparing use of σωτήρ as title for Jesus is that in Greek religion, and especially in the emperor cult, the use of the name "restricted and delayed its currency in the primitive tradition" (Harris 1992, 180; Taylor 1953, 109). Moehlmann (1920, 40–65), though, holds the opinion that it was not until Jesus was called θεός (following the death of Paul, according to Moehlmann) that the early church gave him the title σωτήρ. The key to Moehlmann's (1920, 25–39) hypothesis—as well as to the socio-historical background—is the association of the terms θεός and σωτήρ in the θεὸς σωτήρ formula of Greco-Roman civilization.

- Σωτηρία is used when Zechariah proclaims that God has raised a power for salvation (Luke 1:69), through whom the people of God shall be saved from their enemies (Luke 1:71), and shall enjoy the knowledge of salvation (Luke 1:77). In Luke 19:9, Zacchaeus is told that salvation had come to his house. The term also appears in Acts 4:12; 7:25; 13:26, 47; 16:17; 27:34.
- Σωτήριον appears only four times in the NT. Luke uses it in Luke 2:30, where it is stated that Simeon's eyes have seen the salvation and is used again when the Baptist affirmed that all mankind shall see the salvation of God (Luke 3:6). Another instance is found

[4] The occurrence in Eph 5:23 as a possible example is doubtful.

in Acts 28:28, but it only appears once outside the Lucan material, namely in Eph 6:17.

In Luke's writings, the verb σῴζειν almost exclusively applies to the present (Throckmorton 1973, 516). Its occurrence in Luke is not really more common than in the other gospels[5] (Marshall 1984, 92ff; Zehnle 1969, 420–444), but is to be found 30x in Luke-Acts (17x in the Gospel[6] and 13x in Acts—and *not* the other way round as according to Navone 1970, 141). In Luke's Gospel, σῴζειν is almost always exclusively situated within Jesus' sayings. The last four of the 17 occurrences of the verb in Luke, all occur in the Passion Narrative—with three of those being in the imperative mood, as a command for Jesus to save himself (Luke 23:35 [2x], 37, 39). The five occurrences preceding the four already mentioned are found within the Travel Narrative (Luke 13:23; 17:19; 18:26; 18:42; 19:10).

Of the 17 occurrences of the verb in Luke's Gospel, six parallels are not found in the other synoptic gospels. Of these, three represent SLk material (σέσωκεν, 7:50, 17:19, and σῶσαι, 19:10). A further two of the six occurrences—taken from the Markan material—did not originally contain the verb σῴζειν (as is the case in Matthew's version too), but was inserted by Luke (σωθῶσιν, 8:12, and ἐσώθη, 8:36). The remaining occurrence—and the only one possibly representing Q-material—includes the verb σῳζόμενοι (13:23), which is lacking in Matthew's version.

On the other hand, the omission by Luke of the same verb from his Markan material in instances such as 8:42 (Mark 5:23) and 8:44 (Mark 5:28), is interesting. The reason for such an omission can probably be ascribed to his avoiding the word from instances that simply deal with healing, without faith being involved (Zehnle 1969, 421).

Other words, also used within the semantic domain of salvation, and which are used to denote salvation elsewhere in the NT, can be found in Luke's Gospel:

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[5] Matthew 15x, Mark 14x and John 6x. The sayings in Matthew 18:11 and Luke 9:56 are not found in the oldest MSS. Mark 16:16 is part of a later addition to the Gospel (Marshall 1974).

[6] Luke 6:9 (σῶσαι); 7:50 (σέσωκεν); 8:12 (σωθῶσιν); 8:36 (ἐσώθη); 8:48 (σέσωκεν); 8:50 (σωθήσεται); 9:24 (σῶσαι); 9:24 (σώσει); 13:23 (σῳζόμενοι); 17:19 (σέσωκεν); 18:26 (σωθῆναι); 18:42 (σέσωκεν); 19:10 (σῶσαι); 23:35 (ἔσωσεν); 23:35 (σωσάτω); 23:37 (σῶσον); 23:39 (σῶσον).

- διασώσῃ ("to be healed", 7:3): This seems to be a typical Lucan word (all the other occurrences thereof are found in Acts: 23:24; 27:43, 44; 28:1, 4) and it is never used in the religious sense of being saved (Zehnle 1969, 422). It probably originated from his Q source. The beginning of the narrative differs from that of Matthew, though, with Matthew using θεραπεύσω and ἰαθήσεται later on in the narrative.
- λύτρωσις ("redemption", 1:68 and 2:38): This is a synonym for salvation used by Zechariah in the Benedictus and by the prophet, Anna. It belongs to the SLk material. The combination with ἐποίησεν in 1:68 ("he has done redemption") is interesting—the verb is used twice in respect of God in the Magnificat (1:49, 51). Also of interest is the replacement of τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ in the words of Zechariah with Ἰερουσαλήμ in the words of Anna (Tannehill 1986, 35).
- ἱλάσκεσθαι ("be merciful", 18:13): Is used in the case of the tax collector in the temple who shows remorse. It belongs to the SLk. Two connections are made in this instance: one with sin (μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ), the other with justification (δεδικαιωμένος). The only other place in the NT where this verb is used is in Heb 2:17.
- ἀπολύτρωσις ("redemption", 21:28): This noun belongs to the Markan material in Luke's Gospel, but it is not used by Mark, nor by Matthew, which means it was inserted by Luke.
- λυτροῦσθαι ("redeem", 24:21): This verb (together with the nouns λύτρωσις and ἀπολύτρωσις) belongs to the same word group. It has strong links with Isaiah (41:14; 43:14; 44:24) and is used to express the displaced disappointment of those on their way to Emmaus about the redemption of Israel, which they had expected.

The fact that the explicit soteriological terms listed above are used 31 times in Luke's Gospel (excluding Acts), is proof of their importance to the author. The salvation terminology serves as an indication that salvation is a key concept, and one which the author handled with great care (Zehnle 1969, 423). It would be useful to examine each of these instances more closely. Other references relating to the same theme of salvation also occur, but in these instances, these terms are not used, for example, 12:57–59; 19:44 (τὸν καιρὸν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς); 23:12 (ἐγένοντο φιλοί μετ' ἀλλήλων).

3. The Lucan Birth Narratives[7]

3.1. *Angels Announced the Coming Salvation*

An angel, a divine messenger, announces the birth of John the Baptist to *Zechariah* (1:11ff). John would be the one who would prepare the way for the Lord. Similarly, an angel of the Lord announces the birth of Jesus to *Mary* (1:26ff). The name Jesus literally means "Yahweh is salvation" (Ryken et al. 2000, 755). Elizabeth acknowledges Mary's unborn child as her Lord by calling Mary the "mother of her Lord".

An angel of the Lord also announces the birth of Jesus—designated as *a saviour, who is Christ the Lord* (σωτὴρ ὅς ἐστιν χριστὸς κύριος, 2:11)—to the *shepherds* in the fields. Note that in this instance σωτήρ is in the indefinite: "a saviour". Fohrer indicates that there is not a strong connection between the terms "saviour" and "messiah" in the OT. Σωτήρ is not used as a term for the messiah in the LXX either (Voss 1965, 47). Only in two passages is an approximation to this to be found. Firstly, according to the Hebrew text of Zech 9:9, it is the *messiah* who is delivered by God—but in the LXX it is a *king* who "saves" (σῴζων). The later Jewish idea of the messiah as the one who brings salvation, can thus be detected in these instances. Secondly, in the Hebrew text of Isa 49:6 a reference is made to God's salvation. In the LXX, though, the Servant of the Lord is understood as a messianic figure that shall be to salvation (εἰς σωτηρίαν) for the whole world. It is along the same lines that the NT christological expression σωτήρ finds a philological equivalent in the OT מוֹשִׁיעַ. However, this does not mean that Jesus was called σωτήρ on that basis. There is in fact no evidence that "Redeemer" or "Saviour" were current messianic titles in the NT period (Fohrer 2000, 1012–13). The angel's message is addressed through the shepherds to the whole people—the Jewish people, not to all peoples.

3.2. *Inspired Canticles and Prophesies about the Saviour*

Apart from the fact that the angels (2:14), the shepherds (2:20) and Anna (2:38) were praising God for what had happened, Luke presents

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[7] For a comparison with some OT motifs and the Lucan birth narratives see Forestell (1961, 205–244); Farris (1985); Steyn (1989, 864–873); Ellis (1991, 93).

inspired canticles by Mary, Zechariah, and Simeon—to sing, prophesy, acknowledge and confirm that Jesus is God's Saviour and God's salvation being sent to Israel.

Magnificat (1:46–55): In this instance Mary, Jesus' mother-to-be, sings about God, her salvation: καὶ ἠγαλλίασεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου (1:47)—a phrase which reminds of Hab 3:18 (LXX): ἐγὼ δὲ ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ ἀγαλλιάσομαι, χαρήσομαι ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου. In this song, σωτήρ refers to God. Mary aligns herself with the people of God and from her song it is clear that God is Saviour, both of herself and of the people. In this instance, salvation presents itself in God's acts of deliverance, delivering Mary from humiliation and from Israel's enemies. It denotes God's actions against the mighty and the proud (i.e. those opposing God), undertaken on behalf of the poor and the humble, i.e. those who trust him to provide for their needs. God's action forms part of a long history of merciful concern for his people. The fulfilment of the OT prophecies of hope for salvation becomes the focal point (Tannehill 1986, 15; Forestell 1961, 240).

Benedictus (1:68–79): Salvation is a prominent theme in the Benedictus. In this, Zechariah's canticle, various expressions for salvation are found: *he did redemption* (λύτρωσιν) *for his people* (1:68);[8] *a horn of salvation* (σωτηρία) (1:69)—which is *salvation* (σωτηρίαν) *from our enemies* (1:71)[9] and *being rescued* (ῥυσθέντα) *from the hands of enemies* (1:74). These four expressions all refer to deliverance from enemies as part of the salvation Zechariah expected. Salvation is related to the messianic kingdom and is thus seen as a future event, similar to that of Pharisaic Judaism. It points to salvation as political freedom for the Jewish homeland and links up with the promises made to David and Abraham (Tannehill 1986, 34.37). It remains within the bounds of OT usage, but is without the joy for the destruction of enemies, which is common in later Judaism (Foerster 2000, 990). Then follows a different thought dealing with Zechariah's son, John the Baptist, whose task it was *to give knowledge of salvation* (γνῶσιν σωτηρία)[10] *to his people by the forgiveness of their sins* (1:77). This is a new feature, going beyond contemporary Judaism, because in the latter, the remis-

[8] Cf. also Luke 2:38; Heb 9:12.
[9] Similarly Tannehill (1986, 33): "'salvation' in v. 71 picks up 'salvation' in v. 69".
[10] Regarding the concept of Gnostic saviours, see Schenke (1973, 205–229).

sion of sins is not a central theme of the Messianic salvation, nor of deliverance. It is similar to the usage in gnosticism where *gnosis*, imparted by revelation or by a mediator, saves. The only other place in the synoptic gospels where a similar link can be found, is in the explanation of Jesus' name in Matt 1:21.

In Simeon's song, the *Nunc Dimittis* (2:29–32), he proclaims that my eyes have seen your salvation (σωτήριον). He praises God for the salvation which will come through the birth of the two babies.

Anna too prophesies about him, *to all who were looking for the redemption* (λύτρωσιν) *of Jerusalem* (2:38). λύτρωσιν is also used in 1:68, where the Lord God *has visited and redeemed his people*. The verb is used by those on their way to Emmaus as an expression of their hope (24:21). This term "inevitably evokes images of prisoners of war and their ransom, of slaves and their manumission, and of the condemned to death and their reprieve" (Marrow 1990, 274).

There seems to be a strong likelihood that the *Magnificat* and the *Benedictus* were drawn from two pre-Lucan poems, dating from the time and circle of John the Baptist and which developed from an older, unknown Hebrew psalm. Their contents belong to the ideological and literary trend in Judaism as represented by the Dead Sea Scrolls (Flusser 1988a, 126–149; Thyen 1970, 143–144; Winter 1954, 328–343).

3.3. *John the Baptist Proclaims the Coming Salvation*

John the Baptist is encountered in Luke 3:2ff. He proclaims the coming salvation by quoting Isa 40:3–5 (3:4–6), ending with the words: *and all flesh shall see God's salvation* (τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ). Luke uses this as an extension, whereas Mark and Matthew only quote Isa 40:3 at this point (Snodgrass 1980, 33; Zehnle 1969, 421).

4. Jesus' Mission: A Ministry of Salvation

Luke presents Jesus' entire life as being redemptive (Glöckner 1976; Büchele 1978) and as the core of God's plan for universal salvation (Dömer 1978; Voss 1965, 45). He is the Messiah-Servant who brings the salvation of God (Bock 1987, 153). His ministry, "as divine visitation, takes on profound soteriological significance; Jesus is the prophet-savior, the innocent Just-One whose death achieved the

Father's design and whose resurrection/ascension makes universal salvation possible" (Richard 1990, 6; Glöckner 1976; Dömer 1978). His life and work demonstrates the aptness of his name (19:10). He is the one who forgives (7:47–48) and *there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved* (Acts 4:12) (Ryken *et al.* 2000). This Saviour stands in contrast with the Greek gods and the Roman Emperor worship.

At the beginning of his ministry, the Physician who heals others, but who states that later on they would say of him that he should heal himself, is encountered. At the end of his life, the Saviour, hanging on the cross, is encountered with bystanders mocking him by saying that he, who could save others, could not save himself.

The account of Jesus' public ministry starts with a brief note in Luke 4:15, referring to the fact that he taught in the synagogues in Galilee and *was praised by everyone*. He then went to Nazareth, where he encountered rejection from the Jews, because of his reading and interpretation of Isa 61:1–2a and Isa 58:6[11] (4:18–21). The quotation is primarily a message of salvation for Israel (Koet 1986, 390, 393). Luke portrays Jesus as the prophet who announces salvation, which is depicted as liberation. He himself is the Saviour who was sent to liberate the oppressed, restore sight to the blind, set the captives free and to bring good news to the poor. The quotation from Isaiah, and Jesus' interpretation thereof, belongs to the SLk material and is presented as an architectural plan for the ministry to be followed by Jesus (Koet 1986, 368–394; Schütz 1969, 42). There is, however, a striking resemblance between this passage and 11QMelch in which the messiah (Melchizedek?) announces the eschatological liberation of the captives from Isa 61:1ff. In both contexts liberation has the meaning of being granted through forgiveness of sins (Thyen 1970, 125). The quotation from Isaiah presupposes the Sabbatical Year complex (Jubilee) as background. The Jubilee is the restoration of relations between people and as such, is an element of Israel's covenant with God (Koet 1986, 391).

It is interesting to note that Jesus' soteriological work in Luke's Gospel operates along two major lines (Marshall 1998; 1984, 92ff):[12]

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[11] Luke's quotations consist of two parts—one part reflecting the current situation, the other appealing to the future (Steyn 1995, 233–236).

[12] Cf. the double meaning in the same context in Acts 4:9 and 4:12.

a) Restoration of physical and mental health and well-being, i.e. the well-being of the *physical body*. He is the "physician" who, through healings, exorcisms and resurrections, restores the physical body to a previous or to an ideal physical state.
b) *Spiritual restoration* to an ideal spiritual state through the forgiveness/redemption of sins, through atonement and by entering the kingdom to eternal life. This spiritual sense of restoration is clearly present in Matt 1:21 and Mark 10:26, but is most prominent in Luke.

4.1. *Restoration of the Physical Body*

Some were healed when they came to Him in faith. Others were saved when Jesus reached out to them. It is not just a single part of the body which is healed, but rather the whole person (Marrow 1990, 272).

Luke 6:9 (σῶσαι): This particular question from Jesus is found in the account of *the man with the withered right hand* (6:6–13, par. Mark 3:1–6). It is one of nine places in Luke's writings where σῴζειν is used to describe physical *healing*[13] and is the first time the verb is encountered in a context of Jesus' healings in Luke's Gospel. This healing takes place on a Sabbath in the synagogue. The man with the withered right hand is told to stand in the middle before being instructed to stretch out his hand. This is Markan material in which the verb σῶσαι originally appeared. Although there is no substantial difference between the Markan *Vorlage* and the Lucan redaction (Schütz 1969, 51), some nuance changes regarding the detail are found in Luke, namely: that Jesus was *teaching the people*, that the man's *right* hand was involved, that he was being watched by the *Scribes* and the Pharisees to see whether he would heal *someone* (not specifically this man from the outset) on the Sabbath, that *their thoughts were known* to Jesus, that *the man came and stood in the middle*, that Jesus merely looked at all of them (but, as in Mark, not showing any anger and being deeply sorrowed by their harshness), that the Scribes and Pharisees *were extremely angry* and debated amongst themselves about what should be done to Jesus (whereas in Mark, they leave the synagogue and negotiate with the Herodians). The Jesus *logion*

[13] Cf. also Luke 8:36, 48, 50; 17:19; 18:42; Acts 4:9; 14:9; 27:34.

in which the verb is found, is taken *verbatim* from Luke's Markan source: (Mark 3:4 = Luke 6:9). He performs a miracle on the Jewish Sabbath by healing the man. The man's reaction, except for his act of obedience to Jesus' request to come forward and stand in the middle of the synagogue,—is not described in this account. The reaction of the Scribes and the Pharisees, though, is described. When asked by Jesus if one were allowed to do good or bad on the Sabbath, they remained silent and therefore passive. His question is therefore rhetorical. When Jesus tells the man to stretch out his hand, and he is healed, they, however, respond in an active manner. They become extremely angry and discuss amongst themselves what they should do to Jesus. They do not share in the miraculous act of healing and the physical restoration of the health of a person in their midst. This healing happened quite literally in their midst, in the middle of the synagogue, on their holy day. It is evidence of God's involvement in restoration, yet they are upset by Jesus who, in their opinion, is confronting their tradition, and who, according to their interpretation of the laws, is violating the Sabbath. The reaction, as described by Luke, amounts to a choice for or against the person of Jesus (Schütz 1969, 51), who presents God's salvation.

Luke 8:36 (ἐσώθη): This remark appears within the context of *the demon-possessed man* (8:26–39, par. Mark 5:1–20). This is the only place in Luke's Gospel where σῴζειν is used in relation to Jesus' exorcisms. Luke finds the account in his Markan source, but without the phrase containing the verb ἐσώθη. He then added: πῶς ἐσώθη ὁ δαιμονισθείς (8:36). In this instance the verb σῴζειν is used to denote deliverance, or physical *healing*. It is used to refer to the curing of a demoniac (Throckmorton 1973, 516). Jesus does not set out to meet the man. However, upon meeting Jesus as he steps ashore, there is an immediate reaction from the man—or rather from the demons. The relevant characters involved in this miracle act, react in different ways. The *demons* acknowledge Jesus as the *Son of the Almighty God* and by their reaction, it is clear that they knew who he is. They want to flee from his presence. They plead with Jesus not to torment them and beg him not to order them off to the abyss, but to send them into the pigs (the latter two requests only appearing in Luke's version). *Pleading* and *begging* him, they are thus fully aware of the authority and power he holds over them. The *shepherds* flee from the scene. When they return, accompanied by people from the city and farms, finding the *man* formerly *possessed* by *demons*, now sit-

ting at the feet of Jesus (a common position for people in Luke's account), clothed and cured, they are afraid. After having heard the account from those who had witnessed it, the *people of Gerasene* ask Jesus to leave, because they are afraid. The healed man wants to follow Jesus, pleading with him to let him do so, but Jesus tells him to go back and to tell the people what God had done for him: *explain to people all that God has done for you* (8:39). It is to be noted that Jesus makes a direct connection between the restoration of this man's physical state of well-being and *God* as the Subject thereof.

Luke 8:48 (σέσωκεν): This saying of Jesus is situated within the context of the pericope of *the woman with the flow of blood* (8:42b–48, par. Mark 5:25–34). This example presents another instance where σῴζειν is used in its sense of physical *healing* (Marshall 1998). Considering v. 47, it is probably used in this instance as a synonym for ἰᾶσθαι (Throckmorton 1973, 516). This account resembles the narrative in Luke's Markan source rather closely, also embedding the account within the account dealing with the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus, and following the order of the accounts in Mark. The woman is assured that her faith had saved her. The same formula as the one used in the Jesus *logion* of Luke 7:50, including the phrase πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην, is being used. The connection between faith and salvation is made again—in this instance introduced by Luke, as well as in the next story (8:50), (Fitzmyer 1981, 744). When Jesus wants to know who had touched him, the reaction of the *people* is to deny it having happened and to state that no one is guilty. *Peter*, however, points out that it was crowded and that people were touching Jesus. But Jesus says that some power had left him. It is stated that the *woman* notices that he knew that it was her who had touched him. This proves that Jesus had supra-human knowledge. Following this, the woman trembles from fear and falls down in front of him (at his feet?). She tells him—in the presence of all—how she had touched him and was healed. Note that Jesus does not actively do anything. It is the woman who comes and touches him in faith.

Luke 8:50 (σωθήσεται): This Jesus *logion* is situated within the context of *the resurrection of Jairus' daughter* (8:40–42a, 49–56, par. Mark 5:21–24, 35–43). It is another example where σῴζειν is used to denote physical *healing*, although it describes the restoration of the life of Jairus' daughter. As previously mentioned, this narrative belongs to Luke's Markan material and he follows Mark's order of events closely, also interrupting the narrative with the account of the woman

who suffered from a flow of blood. Jairus, a council member of the synagogue, comes to Jesus, falls to his knees before Jesus' feet, and begs him to come to his house as his only daughter of about twelve is dying. After a delay—the incident involving the woman with the flow of blood—someone from Jairus' household reports that Jairus' daughter had passed away and that he should not bother the Teacher any longer. Upon hearing the news, Jesus tells Jairus not to fear, but to believe and she would be saved (8:50). The connection between faith and salvation is thus made again. Later at the house, when Jesus tells the mourners not to cry as the girl was not dead but merely asleep, they laugh at him and would not believe him. It is the reaction of the "spectators" that is highlighted. It is a reaction of doubt and disbelief. They know very well that the child had died and they do not believe that Jesus has the power to resurrect her from death. The parents, for their part, are struck with astonishment when life returns to their child.

Luke 17:19 (σέσωκεν): This saying appears in the account of the *healing of the ten lepers* (17:11–19). It is SLk material and is a further example where the verb σῴζειν is used to denote physical *healing*. It is used for the cleansing of a leper and appears as a synonym for ἰᾶσθαι (v. 14) and καθαρίζειν (v. 17) (Throckmorton 1973, 517). Again Jesus is being approached by the lepers. He does not go out and actively "impose" his healing powers on people he chooses to heal. As the others before, whose lives were restored, the lepers come to him with their needs and requests. Jesus never touches them, nor does he speak a word to heal them. They are merely commissioned to go and show themselves to the priests. They are in fact not yet healed. It is only on their way, in carrying out Jesus' instruction in obedient faith, that healing sets in. Upon realizing what has happened, only one turns back and praises God out aloud. He falls before the *feet* of Jesus and thanks him. This is the third of the four occurrences in Luke's Gospel where the formula, *Your faith saved you* (7:50), is found (cf. also 8:48; 17:19; 18:42). The connection between faith and salvation is again to be noted. It is reported that all ten lepers were *healed*, but only one returned and was thus also *saved* (17:19) (Schütz 1969, 74)—a Samaritan, an ἀλλογενής, who was not even a Jew! He was the only one who *believed* and *turned back to bring honour to God*. Two striking reactions are to be noted in this instance: The faith (πίστις) of the *stranger* who returned, and the reaction of the *other* nine who did not return to honour God. The reaction at

the end of the pericope is portrayed as Jesus being rejected by his own people.

Luke 18:42 (σέσωκεν): This saying is used in the story of *the blind man from Jericho* (18:35–43, par. Mark 10:46–52). It is Markan material and represents another instance where σῴζειν is used to denote physical *healing*. It deals with the restoration of a blind man's sight. Again, it is the person in need of restoration who approaches Jesus with a request to have pity on him. Once more the initiative does not come from Jesus, but from the blind man who is calling out to Jesus. Those walking in front react by telling him to keep quiet, but he persists and shouts even louder. Twice he calls Jesus the *son of David*. Jesus then requests that the man be brought to him, and not assuming that the man wants his sight restored, he asks what he wants him to do. In response, the man calls Jesus *Lord* and asks that he wishes to see, whereupon Jesus confirms with the statement: *You can see. Your faith saved you*. It is to be noted that there is no physical contact between Jesus and the blind man. Jesus merely speaks. Immediately after the man could see, he follows Jesus and praises God. The reaction of the "spectators", in this case the followers of Jesus, is also to praise God.

4.2. *Restoration of the Spiritual Life*

Luke 7:50 (σέσωκεν): This saying is situated within the pericope of *the sinful woman who anointed Jesus' feet* (7:36–50). A similar narrative is found in the other gospels, but with substantial differences. The Jesus *logion* used in Luke (ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκεν σε) is not found in the other gospel accounts and should be taken as SLk material. Verses 48–50, in particular, were probably added by Luke himself (Schütz 1969, 54). The saying itself, though, already appeared in Mark 5:34 and 10:52. Luke uses it four times in all—in the parallel accounts of the two Markan narratives, namely in 8:48 (Mark 5:34), 18:42 (Mark 10:52), and in two instances where he had inserted it as SLk material: in 7:50 (the text under discussion) and 17:19. In two of the four instances (7:50 [SLk] and 8:48 [Markan material]), the phrase πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην, is included. Through her crying at Jesus' feet and her anointing his feet, the sinful woman probably showed her remorse. In reaction, Simon, the Pharisee, at whose house Jesus is dining when the event takes place, doubts whether Jesus could be a prophet, or else he would have known what kind

of woman this was, the implication being that Jesus was no prophet (Schütz 1969, 54–55). Jesus, in turn, knew what Simon was thinking and confronts him. He then informs the woman that her sins are forgiven. The reaction that follows and is described does not come from the person restored from a state of imperfection, but comes from those surrounding the person. Attention is drawn to the reaction shown by the guests—they want to know who this person is that he can even forgive sins. It is also important to take cognizance of two aspects closely related to the woman's salvation: (a) the woman's state of being, a state of sin, and (b) her faith, that leads to her salvation. An important element in this regard is the forgiving of her sins by Jesus. This is illustrated against the backdrop of the parable Jesus tells Simon about the two debtors whose debt was written off—the one with the most debt, was the most grateful towards his creditor, and for this reason, the attitude of the sinful woman outweighed that of Simon, the Pharisee. Interestingly though, her sins were forgiven *after* the good deeds she bestowed on Jesus, which is yet another example of Jesus being approached and not having taken the initiative in a given situation. He remained passive—as was the case with the woman who touched his clothes and was healed.

Luke 8:12 (σωθῶσιν): This verse forms part of Jesus' *explanation of the parable of the sower* (8:11–15, par. Mark 4:13–20) and originates from Markan material. However, only Luke specifies the sower's seed as the λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (8:11) (Zehnle 1969, 421). Luke also included the phrase ἵνα μὴ πιστεύσαντες σωθῶσιν (*so that they may not believe and be saved*, 8:12), which does not appear in Mark. When Jesus interprets and explains the parable of the sower and refers to the seed which fell on the road, it marks this parable as the only one in Luke's Gospel that is connected to the verb σῴζειν. It is a typical account of Jesus' teaching. The language of the early church is echoed and is probably a technical reference to spiritual salvation that is acquired through hearing the Word of God (cf. also 13:23). Thus, the verb is used in a religious sense (Zehnle 1969, 422). The connection between faith and salvation—similar to 7:50 discussed above—needs to be noted. The explanation of the parable follows the reaction of Jesus' disciples, who want to know what the meaning of the parable of the sower is (8:9–10). In reply, they are told that they were hereby being introduced to the secrets of God's kingdom. Others, however, *look without seeing and listen without understand-*

ing, the latter being a quotation from Isa 6:9–10—quoted at length at the end of Luke's second work (Acts 28:26–27). The explanation of the parable in itself portrays the different reactions to the Word of God.

Luke 9:24 (σῶσαι—σώσει): This paradoxical saying of Jesus is situated within the pericope dealing with how *Jesus is to be followed* (9:23–27, par. Mark 8:34–9:1), and comes from Markan material. Jesus addresses all the listeners and delivers a speech on what it entails to follow him, with the options being given: gain the world and be ashamed of Jesus and his words, or follow him with self-denial and by *bearing the cross*. In this example, a connection is made with the kingdom of God (cf. also 18:26 below). *The Son of Man* will come, shrouded in his glory as well as in that of the Father and his holy angels. The theme, or motif of following Jesus and suffering because of him, or because of acting in his name, recurs frequently in Luke. The wording of 17:33 is interesting, also when compared to 6:22; 6:47; 9:49–50; 9:57; 10:16–17; 11:23; 12:8–9; 14:26–27; 14:33; 18:29; 21:12; 21:17.

Luke 13:23 (σῳζόμενοι): This question is situated within the context of Jesus' speech about *the narrow gate* (13:22–30) and probably belongs to Luke's Q-material. In the Lucan version, an explicit connection is made with the verb σῴζειν. It does not appear in Matthew. This is one of three such occurrences in Luke's Gospel where the verb σῴζειν is not placed in the mouth of Jesus (8:36, 13:23, 18:26). On his way to Jerusalem, he is teaching people. An individual asks him a particular question, but in his response, Jesus uses the plural, addressing all. Although the question asked could be taken as pointing to either the present (cf., for instance, Acts 2:47) or the future (if a future form of εἰμι is supplied) (Throckmorton 1973, 522), it is clear from the context of Jesus' answer that the intention is future. This makes it one of a few passages where σῴζειν is not used within a present historical time, but in future time. The question is not posed as much by an individual wanting to gain information, as it is a stylistic device used to introduce Jesus' speech. The actual question whether many or few would enter, is not answered. Rather, two aspects are highlighted: (a) every effort has to be made to enter through the narrow gate, and (b) the gate will be locked at an unknown time. In this instance, salvation is linked to entrance into the kingdom of God, and is used in a religious sense (Zehnle 1969, 422). The reaction of those on the outside of the gate is described

as begging for entrance, weeping and grinding their teeth and being chased away. People will come from all four directions and join in the feast in the kingdom of heaven.

Luke 18:26 (σωθῆναι): This question appears in the story of *the rich young man* (18:18–30, par. Mark 10:17–31) and belongs to the Markan material. In Matthew's version the verb σῴζειν is omitted, but Luke retained it. The question deals with what needs to be done to inherit eternal life. What ought to be *done*—τί ποιήσας; In Jesus' response, a moral program is outlined (Zehnle 1969, 423). Two things are namely required: (a) to keep the commandments, and (b) to surrender all and to follow Jesus. This left the man with a choice—either he surrendered all he possessed to follow Jesus, or he rejected Jesus and clung to his possessions. He turned away disappointed, whereupon Jesus made a remark on how difficult it was for the rich to enter the kingdom of God, again making a connection between the kingdom of God (v. 25) and salvation (cf. also 9:24 above). In fact, the phrases ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω (18:18), τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσπορεύονται[14] (18:24) and δύναται σωθῆναι (18:26) seem to be used as synonyms in this instance (Marshall 1998). The verb (σῴζειν) is used to indicate a future time and in the religious sense, salvation (Zehnle 1969, 422).

Luke 19:9–10 (σωτηρία—σῶσαι): *The story of Zacchaeus* (19:1–10) is SLk material. Through the inclusion of the word σήμερον, the state of salvation in the *present* is strong emphasised. See also 19:5, where the present state is reinforced with Jesus' statement that it is necessary for him to stay in Zacchaeus' house *today*. This presentness appears a number of times in Lucan writings.[15] The choice exercised by the publican, Zacchaeus—another rich man—stands in contrast to that made by the rich young man. It seems, according to Luke, as if Zacchaeus chooses to share half of his belongings with the poor and to repay fourfold those whom he may have cheated, simply on the basis of Jesus' presence. There is no reprimand by Jesus, nor did any discussion to this effect take place. Zacchaeus is the one who was looking for Jesus and Jesus knew that. He looks up into

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[14] The theme of πορεύομαι is a recurring theme in Luke. Cf., amongst others, Luke 1:17, 76; 3:4ff; 7:27; 7:50; 8:48; 17:19; and the Travel Narrative (Luke 9–19).

[15] Cf. 2:11; 4:21; 5:26; 12:28; 13:32, 33; 19:5, 9; 22:34, 61; 23:43. Also Acts 4:9; 13:33; 19:40; 20:26; 22:3; 24:21; 26:2, 29; 27:33.

the tree where Zacchaeus was and addressing him, invites himself to the sinner's house. Jesus states that this act, namely to seek and save the lost, is in fact the reason why the *Son of Man* came to earth. According to Marshall, this statement of Jesus is a summary of Luke's theology: "The language is that of shepherding and refers to the rescue of sheep from death in various possible ways. The metaphorical usage of such language to refer to God's care of his people was well established and is echoed here" (Marshall 1998, 723). In this regard, Luke 15, with Jesus' three parables of the lost sheep (15:4–7), the lost coin (15:8–10), and the prodigal son (15:11–32), comes to mind.[16] Jesus pronounces σωτηρία[17] onto *the household* of this man—therefore not only for Zacchaeus. In this instance, σωτηρία refers to both a present and a future entering into the kingdom, and is used in the religious sense of salvation (Zehnle 1969, 422).

4.3. *Summary*

Let us briefly, in the light of the questions posed at the beginning of this study, recapture the results drawn from our data. From the range of soteriological terms employed, Luke uses only the *verb* σῴζειν and its derivatives as part of his presentation of Jesus' ministry. The only exception where a *noun*, σωτηρία (19:9), is used occurs in a saying of Jesus where the verb is also present. For most of these occurrences, Luke relied mainly on Markan material, but his redactional hand can be seen in two instances where the verb did not appear in Mark, but was inserted by Luke. Three other instances represented SLk material. In the only instance where the verb appeared in Q-material, it was omitted by Matthew, but included by Luke and one can only surmise that the occurrence thereof in the Lucan account should again be attributed to Luke's redaction. All the occurrences appear in direct speech. They all represent Jesus *logia*, except in three instances: two in Mark (Luke 8:36 where the verb is used by *witnesses* and in 18:26, where it is used by *listeners*) and one, possibly

[16] The same applies to OT passages such as Ezek 34:4, 16 and Ps 119:176.

[17] Cf. Bam (1996, 1047): "The word salvation is mentioned by Jesus only once (Luke 19:9), where it may refer either to himself as the embodiment of salvation imparting pardon to Zacchaeus, or to that which is evidenced by the transformed conduct of the publican."

from Q (Luke 13:23 where *someone* posed the question, using the verb). In two of the three instances the verb, σῴζειν was redactionally inserted by Luke.

Jesus is portrayed as possessing supernatural (divine) power manifested in the *physical restoration* of people. He is capable of knowing the thoughts of the Scribes and Pharisees in the synagogue when the man with the withered hand is healed; the demons acknowledge his power and flee; a woman who had visited many doctors is healed, merely by touching his clothes in faith; a dead child is taken by the hand and called back to life; the lepers are merely sent to present themselves to the priests with Jesus knowing in advance that they will be healed before reaching the priests; and simply by stating that a blind man could see, it happened. As far as *spiritual restoration* is concerned, Jesus has the power to forgive sins, has knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, has the power to save, and those who follow him are promised entry into the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus' ministry consists of four main areas: his teachings, healings, exorcisms and resurrections. Three striking responses from those who came in contact with his ministry run across each of the four areas: (a) some oppose and reject him; (b) some doubt and are not able to make up their minds; (c) others, believe and go to him with their needs, follow him, and find restoration.

5. The Lucan Passion Narrative

In Luke, Jesus often refers[18] to his deliverance, suffering, death,[19] resurrection and ascension.[20] It is closely connected to the *Plan of God* and with the divine δεῖ (e.g. 9:22; 17:25; etc.). The theological significance of Jesus' death is discussed later in Acts in far more detail than in the Gospel. The Gospel, though, sets the tone that some would accept him, while others would reject him (9:22; 17:25). For this reason, he would be the cause of division rather than peace

[18] Cf. 9:21–22, 44; 12:50; 17:25; 18:31–34; 20:13; 22:15, 19–20 (ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν), 22; 22:37; 24:6–7, 46–7.

[19] It is interesting that Jesus' death coincided with the Sabbath—God's day of rest!

[20] Cf. Navonne (1970, 141): "The Lucan concept of *salvation embraces the Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension* of Jesus, as well as the preaching of the Gospel (Acts 13.47; 28.28). Luke does not restrict the saving activity of Jesus to his death."

amongst people (12:51ff). Jesus himself interprets the message of their Scriptures (24:46–47), pointing out that the Christ has to suffer and has to be resurrected from death on the third day. According to him, conversion and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his Name to all nations—beginning in Jerusalem. This highlights the universal character that salvation takes on in Luke.

An important question that surfaces in the Lucan passion narrative deals with the possible role of Isa 53 (Gnilka 1976, 13–50; Larkin 1977, 325–335). To what extent is the Lucan passion narrative based on the motif of Isaiah's suffering servant? In Judaism there is rarely support for the fact that the one who dies, does so in the place of others for their sins (Versnel 1989, 219–242; Gnilka 1976, 41–42). The two classic examples mentioned in this regard, are 2 Macc and 4 Macc. In 2 Macc the martyr suffers and dies on behalf of his people, but also for his own sin, whereas in 4 Macc, he dies without any sin or guilt.

The reaction to Jesus' ministry of salvation reaches a climax in Luke's Gospel when he hangs on the cross. When the verb σῴζειν is used again, the reactions depicted this time, are those of the Jewish leaders, the Roman soldiers and even that of a criminal who was dying with him. Luke's version does not have a reference to passers-by mocking Jesus, as is the case in Mark and Matthew. Reference is, however, made to onlookers who were merely watching the scene. Each mocking reaction quoted, contains an ironical confession: Jesus is the Christ, God's elected (by the Jewish religious leaders); he is indeed the King of Jews (by the representatives of the Roman government) and he is the Christ—messiah (by the political rebel).

Luke 23:35 (ἔσωσεν, σωσάτω): The Jewish leaders scoff at him, mocking him as leader, as God's elected one. Luke omits the Markan remark (which Matthew follows), namely that Jesus is mocked for *not being able* to save himself. Mark, (followed by Matthew—who adds καὶ πρεσβυτέρων), mentions the leaders to be οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων. Of particular interest is Luke's emphasis on *the Christ* (see 23:39 below), *the elected of God*. Mark reads ὁ χριστὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰσραήλ and in Matthew it only reads βασιλεὺς Ἰσραήλ. Luke has an additional σῴζειν verb (four in the passion narrative, as opposed to the three in Mark and Matthew). The εἰ-sentences echo the temptation narratives in Luke 4.

Luke 23:37 (σῶσον): After Jesus had been crucified, the Roman *soldiers* mock him as king of the Jews. The mocking by the soldiers

that took place *before* the crucifixion (Mark 15:16–20; Matt 27:27–31) is omitted by Luke. In a certain sense, Luke replaces the mocking coming from the passers-by (in Mark and Matthew) with that of the soldiers.

Luke 23:39 (σῶσον): *One of the criminals* being crucified with Jesus—probably a political rioter—is busy mocking him as the Jewish political hero whose coming was expected. In Mark and Matthew on the other hand, *both* criminals are mocking Jesus. In Luke, though, the reaction to whom Jesus is, and the choices made by individuals when confronted by him, run through to the crosses on either sides of Jesus. The one criminal joins the mockers, those who are "against Jesus"—even though he is himself in the process of dying. The other crucified criminal joins those who are "for Jesus". He acknowledges guilt and asks Jesus to remember him when he is in his kingdom. This, in turn, is an acknowledgement that Jesus is indeed the king, thereby establishing a link between messiah and saving (cf. 2:11).

The Emmaus narrative defines the Jews' expectation regarding Jesus: They were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel (λυτροῦσθαι, 24:21).[21] The expectation is for the long awaited messiah who would be sent by God to free Jews from all their enemies, so that a new period of blessing and prosperity could start (Marshall 1974, 154).

6. Elements of Luke's Soteriology

A survey of the above data, concerning the terminology used and the contexts in which they are found, reveals the following elements regarding Luke's use of soteriological terms and phrases:

6.1. *The Subject of Salvation: God*

The message of the coming salvation and of the Saviour has a divine origin. The message is brought by angels, messengers of God, who also announce what his name should be. Therefore, the message has

[21] Cf. Thyen (1970, 155): "überhaupt wird der λύτρον-Begriff (sc. von Lukas) nur auf die fromme Erlösererwartung der Juden angewandt (Lc 1, 68; 2, 38; 24, 21 mit Jes. 41, 14; 43, 14; 44, 22f; 62, 12 . . .)."

divine authority, and its contents, namely that Jesus is God's Son, receives heavenly confirmation in instances such as Jesus' baptism (3:22) and his transfiguration (9:35–36). A striking characteristic throughout the Gospel is the fact that when the healings and miracles take place, people praise *God*—not Jesus.[22] This fits the profile of the ancient socio-religious world in which Luke wrote. In the Greco-Roman world, the term, σωτήρ, was well known as an epithet for gods in their roles as helpers of humanity (Marshall 1998, 721). This help extended beyond assistance in mere distress. Especially Zeus, but many other Greek gods too, were σωτῆρες of the *polis* and its citizens, as "protectors" and "preservers".[23] One of the best-known gods, who was worshiped at various shrines as healer of the sick under the term σωτήρ, was the god Asclepius.[24]

6.2. *Salvation of "the Soul"*—τὴν ψυχὴν σῶσαι

In Luke's writings distinct differences are made between the use of ψύχη[25] and πνεῦμα (e.g. 1:47; 23:46) on the one hand, and σῶμα (e.g. 12:4, 23; 22:19) and σάρξ, on the other. From the foregoing discussion it has become clear that Luke presents Jesus' soteriological work during Jesus' ministry along the lines of *physical* and *spiritual* restoration. Within Platonic thinking, salvation means the deliverance of the "soul" from the prison of the body. The Stoics, Pythagoreans and even some Jewish circles pursued this thinking, which, by the first century, had become influential. Ellis sees a difference between Jesus and the NT apostles and prophets whom he considers to be closer to apocalyptic Judaism in that they "proclaim God's final redemption to be a salvation in history, that is a redemption of matter in time" (Ellis 1991, 102–3). Although the "saving" activities of Jesus takes place along the body-spirit lines, restoration of the body receives a great deal of attention. But it is

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[22] Cf. 1:46ff, 64ff, 68ff; 2:14, 20, 28, 38; 5:25, 26; 7:16; 8:39; 9:43; 13:13; 17:15; (18:19); 18:43; 19:37–38; 23:47; 24:53 (last verse of Luke!) Voss rightly says that "in Jesus (wird) die Herrschaft Gottes offenbart" (1965, 59).

[23] "In this σωτήρ includes a common use of the verb σῴζω and its noun σωτηρίας" (Fohrer 2000, 1012–13).

[24] Cf. De Villiers (1988, 199): "Asclepius was lauded as the god of healing and as a saviour who came to the aid of human beings and cared for them. Other saviour figures or gods who effected healing included Isis and Sarapis."

[25] Cf. 1:46, 47; 2:35; 6:9; 9:24; 10:27; 12:19, 20, 22; 14:26; 17:33; (21:19 by Marcion); Acts 2:27, 43; 20:24; 27:22.

the sayings in 9:24 and 17:33 that deserve attention. Two things come to the fore: Firstly, a more *holistic* approach in Jesus' salvific activity as the focus of restoration also includes bodily restoration—not an escape of the soul from the body within which it is trapped as in Plato's philosophy. Secondly, restoration already commences with Jesus' ministry. There is an *immediate-ness* to Jesus' salvific activity. (The present-ness of salvation in Luke's Gospel is discussed in more detail below).

6.3. *Salvation by Faith*—ἡ πίστις σέσωκέν σε

Faith is yet another prominent motif running through Luke's Gospel.[26] A number of times, a connection is made between salvation and faith. People often go to extreme acts—or are encouraged to take such leaps of faith—in order to be healed. These acts serve as acknowledgement of Jesus' power and ability as a supernatural healer. It also serves as proof of faith in Jesus as the one who is the Saviour. It is the presence of this faith that leads Jesus to proclaim the *forgiveness of the sins* (5:20) to the lame man who is let down through the roof and to the woman who anoints Jesus' feet (7:48, 50). It is this faith which was *not even found in Israel* which leads to Jesus' healing of the gravely ill slave of a Roman centurion (7:9) and leads him to proclaim that a Samaritan leper, the only one out of the ten to be healed who thanks God, to be saved. There are of course also *desperate marginalized Jews* who take such a leap of faith, such as the hemorrhaging woman, who touches Jesus' clothes (8:48) and the blind man from Jericho, who perseveres with his plea for mercy (18:42), and are healed—or the desperate Jewish council member, Jairus, who is encouraged to believe even beyond the physical realities of death (8:50).

Lack of faith should not be allowed. Instead, as Jesus explains in the parable of the sower (8:12–13), faith should be firmly rooted and should not be allowed to be lost, the latter is illustrated by his question to the disciples amidst the storm at sea (8:25). At a later stage, the disciples realize their lack of faith and ask Jesus to grant them greater faith (17:5). In 22:32, Jesus assures Peter that it is his prayer for Peter's faith not to forsake him (22:32). Jesus also contemplates

[26] Cf. Luke 5:20; 7:9; 8:12, 13; 8:25, 50; 17:5; 18:8; 22:32, 67; 24:25, 41.

whether he, upon his return, would still find some faith on earth (18:8) and tells the Sanhedrin that even if they were told by him in person that he was indeed the Christ, they still would not believe him (22:67)—a similar attitude to that shown by the travellers from Emmaus (24:25, 41). Even at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry in Nazareth, his own people reject him and do not believe (in) him—but the Roman centurion (belonging to the Roman Empire with its worship of the Emperor as Saviour) does!

6.4. *Salvation and Forgiveness of Sin*

The forgiveness of sin is yet another prominent theme,[27] which, in some instances, is closely connected to salvation. John the Baptist for example, has knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of sins (1:77). If *conversion* takes place, then God will forgive people their sins (3:3; 13:2–5; 15:7, 10). Similar reactions also appear in 15:21 and 18:13. Jesus does not distance himself from sinners.[28] He receives them and eats with them (5:30, 15:2), stays with them (19:7) and teaches forgiveness of one's "brother" (17:3–4). He teaches his disciples to pray for the forgiveness of their sins (11:4) and ultimately, as he is hanging on the cross (23:34), he himself prays for the forgiveness of those who had crucified him. During Jesus' mission, conflict increases with the Pharisees and Scribes. In 5:21, for example, they question the fact that Jesus had forgiven a lame man his sins and regard it as blasphemous, for only God could forgive sins. Jesus' response is that they should know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins (5:24). Again, in 5:30, they are rather upset, because Jesus mingled and ate with tax collectors and sinners. In 5:31–32, Jesus' response to this accusation is presented:

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[27] Cf. 1:77; 3:3; 5:20, 32; 11:4; (13:2, 4; 15:2, 7, 10, 21; 17:3–4) 18:13; (19:7); 23:34, 47. Cf. Friedrich (1982, 20): "Kein Autor des Neuen Testaments redet so viel von der Vergebung der Sünden wie Lukas. Aber an diesen Stellen wird sie nicht in Zusammenhang mit dem Sterben Jesu gebracht, sondern man erhält sie durch Umkehr (Act 3, 19), durch die Taufe (Lk 3, 3; Act 2, 38; 22, 16), durch den Namen Jesu (Lk 24, 47; Act 10, 43), durch die Erhöhung Jesu (Act 5, 31), durch den Auferweckten (Act 13, 37f), durch den Glauben an Jesus (Act 26, 18)."

[28] "His salvation is not only liberation from confusion, strife, sickness, and the entanglements of matter, as in Hellenistic religion, but deliverance from sin and guilt" (Taylor 1953, 109).

Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance.

Luke 7:47–50 is another passage that is prominent in this regard. According to the Lucan Jesus, the woman who anoints Jesus' feet had many sins and therefore shows more love. With one single statement, Jesus forgives her all her sins.

Luke's Gospel ends with the commission that conversion and the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed to all the nations in the name of Jesus (24:47).

6.5. *Salvation "by Following"/"for the Sake of"/"in the Name of" Christ*

When the rich young man approaches Jesus and asks him what would be required of him in order to be saved, Jesus answers that he should (a) keep the commandments and (b) give up all and follow Jesus (18:18–30).[29] The choice people have to make, either for or against Jesus, is highlighted a number of times. Individuals and groups are confronted with the reality of having to unconditionally follow Jesus. They are encouraged *to come to him, listen to his words and do what he says* (6:46), because *rejection of him implies rejection of the one who sent him* (10:16) and *whoever is not against him is for him* (9:49; 11:23; 12:8ff). Even *the demons will submit in his name* (10:17). The cost and sacrifice associated with following Jesus, are spelt out: *people hate you, exclude you, insult you and reject your name as evil* (6:22); following Jesus means *to deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow him* (9:23; 14:27); it might result in not having a *place to lay your head* (9:58), *to leave* family responsibilities *behind*—including one's own life (9:60; 14:26, 33; 17:33; 18:29–30) and to not *look back* (9:62); to be persecuted when *they lay their hands on you—on account of his name* (21:12); *to be betrayed by your own family, relatives and friends, and even to be put to death* (21:16); *all people will hate you because of his name* (21:17). Fact is, *whoever loses his life because of him will save it* (9:24), as he himself gave his life for their sake (22:19).

Luke presents Jesus as the centrifugal point of God's salvation. Those who encounter Jesus, who have faith and follow him, are restored in spirit and body. Note that before healing them, He first

[29] "For salvation, Jesus requires a positive commitment similar to His own (cf. Lk 9:23–27, 57–62)" (Zehnle 1969, 423).

forgives their sins. It is in his name that conversion and the forgiveness of sins take place (24:47), because the *Son of Man came to search for and save the lost* (19:10).

6.6. *Salvation and Peace*: πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην

Another *Stichwort* in Luke's Gospel is εἰρήνη.[30] In certain instances, salvation is also linked to peace. The songs at the beginning of Luke's Gospel point the way in this regard: Zechariah sings about John the Baptist as being the one who would *guide our feet into the path of peace* (1:79); the angels proclaim peace to humankind with the birth of Jesus (2:14); and Simeon can go in peace after he holds God's salvation in his arms (2:29). Jesus taught the seventy-two to enter a house by announcing peace to it (10:5–6). He pointed out that his coming would result in division and not peace (12:51). During Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (19:38), the whole crowd praises God in loud voices, proclaiming *Peace in heaven. . . .* But, as he approaches Jerusalem, Jesus weeps over the city, saying that if it only knew what would bring it peace (19:42). Later, in 24:36, when he appears to his disciples, he greets them, saying *Peace be with you.*

It is especially in 7:50 (the anointing scene) and in 8:48 (the scene in which the hemorrhaging woman was sent away to go in peace) where the link is made between faith, which saves, and peace.

6.7. *Salvation and the Kingdom of God*: τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ

The theme of the kingdom of God is undoubtedly one of the most prominent[31] and most discussed topics. This is not the place to deal with it in detail, but suffice to say that in certain instances, it is also linked to salvation. Three of these instances originate from Markan material. In his explanation of the parable of the sower, Jesus states that it has been given to them (the disciples) to know the secrets of the kingdom of God (8:10). A reference to the kingdom of God also features in Jesus' explanation of what is required to follow him, when

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[30] Cf. 1:79; 2:14; 2:29; 10:5–6; 12:51; 19:38, 41; 24:36.

[31] Cf. 4:43; (6:23); 7:28; 8:1, 10; 9:2, 11, 27, (51), 60, 62; 10:9, 11; 11:2, 20; 12:31, 32; 13:18, 20, 28, 29; 14:15; (15:7); 15:10; 16:16; 17:20, 21; 18:16, 17, (22), 24, 25, 29; 19:11; 21:31; 22:16, 18, 29, 30; 23:42, 51.

he says that those following him should carry their cross (9:23–26), and points out that some of them would not die before they had seen the kingdom of God (9:27). Another reference to the kingdom of God appears in the incident involving the rich young man, when Jesus says it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God—whereupon those who had heard it, wanted to know who then could be saved (18:25–26). The other reference comes via Q material. In answer to the question whether only a few would be saved, Jesus replied that they would weep and grind their teeth when they see the patriarchs and the prophets in the kingdom of God (13:23–28).

6.8. *The Time of Salvation*: σήμερον?[32]

The present-ness of the events surrounding Christ is another element that is very prominent in Luke's Gospel.[33] This aspect is also linked to salvation. The time word "today" features quite often: It is "today" that a Saviour is born in the town of David (2:11), "today" that salvation has come to the house of Zacchaeus (19:9) and "today" that the one criminal will be with Jesus in paradise (23:43). The *kairos* of God's salvation takes place in the present, in the presence of Jesus. After Jesus' death and reappearance to some, it brings a new perspective to the kingdom of God. Jesus' post-death appearance to the disciples, means that the kingdom of God has come to their midst, linking God's salvation and eschatology (cf. Flusser 1988b, 229–245). God's salvation is therefore not just future (as in Pharisaic Judaism), or an enhancement of the present (as in Qumran), or so strongly present (as in Gnosticism): "It is present, for with Christ the new aeon has come and believers are drawn into it . . ." (Fohrer 2000, 1012–13).

7. Conclusion

So how does salvation operate in Luke's Gospel?

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[32] For the differing viewpoints of Conzelmann and Tiede in this regard, see Kodell (1983, 16–18).

[33] Cf. 2:11; 4:21; 5:26; 12:28; 13:32, 33; 19:5, 9; 22:34, 61; 23:43. See also Acts 4:9; 13:33; 19:40; 20:26; 22:3; 24:21; 26:2, 29; 27:33.

- *The Subject:* It has become clear that God remains the ultimate Subject of the salvation. It is through the power of God (5:17; 6:18; 11:20) that Jesus heals the sick, forgives sins, proclaims the coming kingdom and exercises exorcisms (Feldkämper 1978, 335). All of those who come in contact with the Saviour and are restored, praise God—not Jesus.
- *The object*: All of those who are physically disabled and those who are "lost" (19:10). It is the ψυχή that is saved.
- *The mode:* A Saviour is being sent. He is the instrument through whom, and in the presence of whom, restoration takes place. This is also emphasized by Voss who states: "Immer aber ist die so verstandene Rettung gebunden an die Person und den Namen Jesu" (1965, 46). Acknowledgement and acceptance of him lead to physical and spiritual restoration. The following and acceptance of Jesus play a prominent role in Luke's salvation. Jesus is a centrifugal force who draws others to him. Those who accept him and believe in him are restored. It is their πίστις that is the result of or condition for their salvation (7:50; 8:48, 50; 17:19; 18:42; 19:9; Acts 14:9).
- *The purpose*: The different contexts in which salvation takes place, testify to the fact that people are restored, both physically and spiritually. Scheffler indicates how, in Luke, salvation takes place in different dimensions: *Economically*, those in need are abundantly supplied with good things (1:52, 54, 68–75; 2:30–31, 38; 3:6; 9:54–56; Acts 1:6–8); *socially*, those who were cast out, are accepted (19:9–10); *physically*, those who were ill, are healed (6:9; 8:48, 50; 17:19; 18:42); *psychologically*, those who were possessed are "freed" (8:36: πῶς ἐσώθη against πῶς ἐγένετο in Mark 5:16; cf. also 4:18 and Acts 10:38); and *religiously*, sins are forgiven (1:77; 7:50) (Scheffler 1991, 78). Jesus himself states that the Saviour was sent to search and save those who are lost. It is a total restoration on all levels of society. It is a holistic approach that provides an opportunity to enter into the kingdom of God (13:23; 18:26).
- *The time*: The *kairos* of the salvation is the present: σήμερον. It does not point to the future, end-time or consummation, but to historical reality, as experienced by the apostolic church (Throckmorton 1973, 526).
- *The consequences*: The common denominator in all of the above contexts dealing with salvation seems to be the fact that, in the presence of the Saviour, a change in attitude takes place. This

aspect becomes particularly clear in Acts.[34] The attitude change takes on different forms in different situations. Some repent, others turn around (μετανοέω, Luke 9; Acts 5); some correct their wrongs, some believe, some persevere. However, the Gospel ends on an anti-climax: The Jews thought he was the Saviour, the Redeemer of Israel, the one who would come to save his people. In this regard, the remarks made by Mary, Zechariah, the angels, Simeon and Anna during Luke's birth narratives should be borne in mind. But then he was crucified and died (24:21). This raises the question of the theological significance of Jesus' death. Suffice to say that it seems as if, according to Luke 22:19–20 and Acts 20:28, as well as a proper understanding of the use of Isa 53:12 (which has been used as a pointer to the larger original context) in 22:37 (Larkin 1977, 325–335; Marshall 1971, 138; Stonehouse 1951, 170), Luke indeed has a redemptive understanding of Jesus' death. The disciples do not understand the necessity of Jesus' suffering (18:34).

- *The origins of Luke's perspective*: The roots of the salvific elements are firstly to be sought in the *Old Testament*. The programmatic presentation of the passage from Isaiah, which Jesus read at the beginning of his ministry (4:18–19), is a key element in understanding Luke's soteriology. It provides both the reason for, as well as the program of Jesus' salvation. The same motif of Isa 61, quoted in the context of the messiah who announces liberation in the sense of forgiveness of sins, is also to be found in 11QMelch. It presupposes the context of the Jubilee and its restoration. Secondly, Luke found aspects of his understanding of God's salvation via Jesus in the *Hellenistic milieu* within which he wrote. Jesus is presented as an εὐεργέτης (22:25)—a typical Lucan word, only used by him, and used synonymously with σωτήρ in Hellenistic inscriptions. It alludes to the Hellenistic understanding of liberation as being liberation from a foreign power. In Hellenism, as well as in the late Jewish messianic expectations, the possibility for a life of peace and good relationships was created (Voss 1965, 46–60).

Luke's story of salvation thus depicts an unannounced "Jubilee" period. It describes God's involvement in a process of restoration

[34] Cf. Zehnle (1969, 425): ". . . a man is saved by that change of heart which is motivated by faith in Jesus and expressed by baptism in His Name."

that is immanent on all levels of society. God uses Jesus, who restores all aspects of the lives of those who came in contact with him. No one remains neutral. People either accept, follow, and believe in Jesus; or they reject him, turn away from him, and do not believe him. The Jews had a narrow expectation of God's salvation and were expecting a political liberator, one who would free Jerusalem. Jesus, however, recognized the social outcasts—the poor and the weak and the marginalized. It is their abilities, their self-esteem and their roles in society which are restored. Furthermore, the position of people before God is restored. Jesus has the power to proclaim that their sins are forgiven. God's salvation thus relates to the status of people in society and their status before God. This reflects the status of Jesus himself: Ἰησοῦς Χριστός εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτήρ.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SALVATION IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

Jan G. van der Watt
University of Pretoria

1. Introduction

In the stated purpose for writing the Gospel (20:31), "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name", Christology and soteriology[1] are identified as the two major themes, and are even equated by some (Tong 1983, 100). An interesting observation is that relatively little has been published on soteriology as an independent theme, seen in the light of the flood of publications on this Gospel. The trends in the research on the Gospel seem to be:

a) The theme is so dominant in the theology of John, that it is usually developed in relation to other themes in this Gospel, and not as an independent theme. It forms part of most of the descriptions of theological themes in this Gospel, but is rarely developed in depth on its own.[2]
b) Where the focus falls on the soteriology, the presentation of the material is usually descriptive in nature (see, for example, Beasley-

[1] Salvation (soteriology) is defined as the action of restoring the relationship with God, or how one moves from spiritual death to life. Relevant questions are: from what, how and to what is a person saved? Focus will not fall on the results of salvation.

[2] For instance, Tong (1983), writing a dissertation on aspects of Johannine soteriology, refers only to five sources having any reference to soteriology in their titles. Dukes (1983) refers to one. Crehan (1965) writes a theology of John and develops twenty four themes, without paying attention to soteriology as an independent theme. In her monograph, Morgan (1993) approaches "sauver dans l'évangile de Jean" through a close study of the related vocabulary and an exegetical study of the fundamental texts. Van Belle (2001) treats the theme in his historical critical study on the parenthesis in John 4:22b in relation to the subject "Anti-Judaism in the Fourth Gospel and Jewish-Christian Dialogue". The book of Bennema (2002) treats the soteriology of the Gospel of John from a "Pneumatic Wisdom" perspective.

Murray 1987, ad loc.). In-depth discussions are usually not attempted and sometimes the discussions follow detours, like the discussions of Sevenster (1946, 235–237) or Coetzee (1990, 62–65) who fall into the trap of trying to defend the theology of the cross (against Bultmann or Käsemann) rather than discussing the soteriology.

c) Although commentaries obviously treat the theme where it occurs in different verses, most of them do not treat it in-depth as a separate theme on its own. If it is done, the treatment is usually brief and descriptive (Beasley-Murray 1987).

The argument to be unfolded in this article is that the soteriology is developed within the context of and determined by a conflict (of which the contours cause a continuing debate in Johannine literature—see, for example, Coloe 2001, 1–4; Reinhartz 2001, 213–227; Bieringer et al. 2001, to mention just some of the more recent sources within a flood of literature dealing with this issue) between the "disciples of Moses"[3] and Johannine Christianity (called the disciples of Jesus). The major question was "where and with whom is God?" This is a question, which was answered differently by the disciples of Jesus and the disciples of Moses, based on their differing convictions of who Christ was, each consequently claiming that God is on their side and that theirs is the authentic religion. It will be illustrated that this conflict is formative in the way John formulates and presents his soteriology. It will be shown that John does not present a comprehensive, a-historical, all-inclusive soteriology, for the sake of describing a soteriology, but a soteriology modelled on questions at stake in the conflict, namely, "with whom is God and where can he be found (seen/heard)?" It will be argued that efforts to treat the soteriological expressions in the Gospel as a-historical or as a closed soteriological system, which would validate expressions like "Johannine

[3] The identity of the Jews is a widely discussed topic in recent literature. "Jews" should not be identified with modern Jews, neither with all genealogical Jews in ancient times. Jesus and his disciples were also Jews (see De Jonge 2001, 121–140; Lieu 2001, 110–113). De Boer (2001, 141–157) argues that the "Jews" indicated in the Gospel are a socio-religious category of people who identify themselves as "disciples of Moses" (9:28). See Ashton (1994, 44–49). No effort to identify the "Jews" as such will be made in this article. The Jews will be described according to the material given in the Gospel itself and it can at least be argued that the Jews exist in this narrative as a fictive group with these qualities. Further than that I would not like to go in this article. They identify themselves as the "disciples of Moses" and therefore this phrase will be used to refer to them.

soteriology does not have a blood or cross theology", or "Johannine soteriology opposes reconciliation" or similar ideas, rest on a misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of Johannine soteriology.

This article's argument is as follows: At first, it will be shown that both groups claimed the same God. This is to illustrate that Jesus is not introducing a new religion, but represents the continuation of the worship of the God of Israel. Then follows a brief analysis of the problem experienced between the disciples of Moses and the disciples of Jesus, to reveal what the real problem (sin) was that invited a specific soteriology. And finally, the focus will be shifted to the way in which John conceptualises salvation within this context of conflict. It will be shown that he argues in terms of re-socialization (see Petersen 1993, 80ff), which requires a specific entrance into the family of God.

Before we continue, a methodological remark must be made: because the theme of salvation is related to nearly every major theme in this Gospel, all important aspects cannot be developed here in detail (doing this would result in a theology of John). The policy is to provide what is necessary for unfolding my argument, and for the rest to refer to relevant discussions elsewhere and use their results, without repeating or reworking the material.

2. Who is the God Who Saves?

In a discussion with the Samaritan woman, Jesus remarks: "You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what *we* do know, for *salvation is from the Jews*" (4:22). (See Ashton 1994, 45 for the identity of these "Jews"). This discussion deals with true worship of the real God (4:19–24). The problem, however, is that both the disciples of Jesus and the disciples of Moses claim to worship this very same God.

There can be no uncertainty about the identity of this God—he is the God whom the Jews worship (8:41; 8:54; 11:52), the creator God who gives life (1:1–5, 10; 5:26; 6:57). He is the God who was active in and through history (1:6; 3:2; 6:32; 9:3), revealing himself through the prophets (3:2; 6:45), was obeyed by Abraham (8:39), worked through Moses (9:29), was worshipped in the temple (2:14ff), and was honoured through the cultic activities of the Jews (i.e. purification, Sabbath, feasts—5:18; 7:22; 9:16). However, in spite of

this religious presence, nobody has ever seen (or heard) this God (1:18; 5:37; see also 1 John 4:12—for a full description of God in this Gospel, see Thompson 2001, 57ff, and Tolmie 1995, 57–75). And this is the same God Jesus claims to represent and the God his opponents' claim to worship (8:54), although both opposing groups respectively deny the presence of God with the opposing group (claims against Jesus—10:33; 19:7; claims against the opponents of Jesus—8:19, 24, 54–55). This seems to be a self-evident conclusion, but it is important for our argument, for the following reasons:

a) Referring to the same God implies that Jesus does not claim to bring a new god or for that matter a new religion, but that He claims to continue the true religion of the God of Abraham, Moses and Isaiah. This leaves his opponents, the self-confessed disciples of Moses, without the true God.
b) If God cannot be seen, *mediation* of God becomes functional. That Jesus is the mediator of God (1:18) becomes *a*, if not *the*, main argument in this Gospel. This view of God allows for that and should make a representative figure acceptable to both conflicting groups.
c) The conflict between these two groups, claiming to worship the same God, focuses on the image and understanding they have of God. The views the two groups have of the same God, indeed, seem to differ.

John moves away from the typical descriptions of God and calls him predominantly "Father" (see Tolmie 1995, 57–75; Thompson 2001, 57–100). The conflict on the level of who God is in relation to Jesus and his opponents is clear from debates in, for example, 8:14–59 or 10:31–39. Although they have the same God in mind, their views of him—especially in relation to Jesus and his behaviour towards cultic aspects like the Sabbath—differ. The disciples of Jesus claim that, if somebody does not accept the image and reality of God as it becomes present in Jesus, he or she is without God—this defines the essence of the conflict. This is also why Christology and soteriology cannot be separated in this Gospel (20:31).

Realizing that they are talking about the same God draws the focus more sharply on the different opinions between these two groups. In the process of salvation, the opponents of Jesus will also have to change their view of God—He is now the God that can be discovered, seen, and met in Jesus, to the extent that Jesus is not

called a devil or blasphemer, but "my Lord and my God" (20:28). The view of God in this Gospel is transformed by the specific nature, person, and activities of Jesus.

3. The Convictions and Religious Actions of the Disciples of Moses

Between people sharing a communal heritage (i.e. ancestry, Scriptures, prophets, the temple), a conflict grew, which resulted in extreme opposition and abhorrence. Although the disciples of Jesus and the disciples of Moses both claimed to worship the same God, are both linked to the name "Jews", they respectively denied that the other group worshiped God at all. That this situation of conflict forms an important basis for the narrative of this Gospel is widely acknowledged, as was mentioned earlier. To understand the dynamics of this conflict, and consequently to understand the rational behind John's formulation of his soteriology, it is necessary to form some perception of the two conflicting parties. Our attention will turn first to the "disciples of Moses".

3.1. *A Positive Picture of the "Disciples of Moses"*

In an effort to provide a brief categorization of the "disciples of Moses" (9:28–29), often called the Jews (Ἰουδαίοι) in this Gospel (cf. footnote 3 above on the Jews), the following should be noted:

a) From a religious point of view, the *identity* of the opponents seems to be solid. Their ancestors are known in history as the people of God who travelled through the desert, receiving manna from God (6:31) and the law from Moses (1:17; 5:45; 9:28–29). Their ancestry can be traced back even further to Abraham (8:33, 37, 39–40), and even to God (8:41).[4]
b) Their *religious activities* point to a *zealous, devoted* people who serve God in the ways they knew or believed to be the best.

[4] On the importance of ancestry in determining identity in ancient times, see Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1.5.5, 1360b), Plato (*Menex.* 237) and Quintilius (*Inst. Orat.* 5.10.24); Malina (1996, 23–26, 159).

i. The opponents of Jesus are pictured as being active in *Jerusalem* and then around the *temple*, the house of God (2:14–16), where they believed God was supposed to be worshipped (2:13; 4:20; 5:1; 10:22; 11:55).[5] Their religious matters were organized by their leaders at the temple (1:19; 7:32, 45; 11:46–47, 57; 12:10; 18:3, 35; 19:21). *Synagogues* were centres for socio-religious activities and apparently served as measure for social acceptance (9:22, 34–35; 12:42; 16:2).

ii. Study of the *Scriptures* formed a cornerstone of their religious endeavours, because they thought that they received eternal life through study (salvation—5:39). Predictions in Scripture (1:45) were also taken seriously (1:20–21; 7:26, 40–44).

iii. Their *devotion* shows in their wish to honour and serve God (9:24; 16:2). They were strict about their purity laws (2:6; 11:55; 18:28; 19:42) and kept their religious feasts (2:13; 5:1; 7:2, 10; 11:55; 12:1, 20—Ashton 1994, 39–42), especially the Sabbath—they even wanted to kill Jesus for breaking the Sabbath law (5:16, 18; 7:22–23; 9:16). They are even pictured as "religiously *fanatical*" in their actions: they intend to kill the Christians with the idea that they would be serving God in this way (16:2).

Right or wrong, they seem to be genuine about their religion. The idea of a well-organized religious group, who seriously try serving God through their cultic activities, is portrayed. Thus far, the picture seems positive, BUT, and this is the big "but", all these religious activities were not enough to secure salvation. Religion and religious activities are not equivalent to salvation. What did the Jews lack?

3.2. *What Was Wrong with the "Disciples of Moses"?*

The criticism against the disciples of Moses is focused: They do not worship God any longer—their religion is without God. They have not seen or heard God (8:47), and they do not know him (8:19, 54–55; 15:21; 17:25), because they are spiritually dead (5:24), irrespective of their socio-religious zeal. They are spiritually blind and do not realize it (9:27–41). The spiritual blindness and deafness are

[5] See 1:19; 7:32, 45; 12:10; etc.; see also 1:46; 7:52. Aristoteles (*Rhet.* 1.5.5, 1360b) discusses the importance of locality in establishing identity. Neyrey (1996; 119); Carson (1991, 159–160).

most apparent in their rejection and hatred of Jesus. This is their sin from which they must be saved. The essence of their sin is clear: it is not expressed in terms of individual deeds or guilt, but in terms of not accepting (believing in) God as he is revealed in and through Jesus (1:9–11; 5:44–46; 8:24; 10:36–39; 15:23–24). A detailed analysis of sin in this Gospel bears this out (see, for example, Metzner 2000). This implies that the opponents of Jesus and their religion are without God and consequently, the wrath of God rests on them (3:36; 5:24).

If the question were asked, "From what must a person be saved according to John?", the answer would be, "From a lack of spiritual knowledge and blindness in order to be able to see and know the Father in the Son." This existential situation, namely, to be without God, results in the hatred for and rejection of the Son and the Father by the opponents of Jesus, and consequently, in their evil behaviour.

3.3. *How Did the Opponents of Jesus View Jesus and His Disciples?*

Let us approach the problem from another angle, namely: What were the problems the Jews had with Jesus? The problem, as it is described in this Gospel, is again focused.

Their main criticism is stated in 5:18: "For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God." Jesus was accused of blasphemy because he claimed to have a special relationship with God, the Father. This accusation of blasphemy is repeated and discussed elsewhere in the Gospel (10:33) and is used as argument to have Jesus crucified (19:7). The essence of their criticism is clear: Jesus does *not* stand on the *side of God*—He is a sinner (9:24) and is accused of having a demon (7:20; 8:48, 52; 10:20–21). To the question: "*Where is God?*" the disciples of Moses conclude: "Not with Jesus." That is why, in their eyes, He is guilty of blasphemy. He could not be the Messiah at all (Richter 1977, 61 regards this as the most telling action of the opponents, based on 12:34). This was apparent through his behavior on the Sabbath. Both the healing of the lame and the blind man took place on the Sabbath. The problem is vocalized in 9:16: "Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath'." His behaviour towards the Law disqualified Jesus as being from God.

4. The Answer that Leads to Salvation

Scholars, like Bultmann (1984) and later Forestell (1974), described the soteriology of John solely in terms of the *revelation* of God. Although the exclusiveness of this view has been corrected over the past few decades (see Sevenster 1946, 239–240; Coetzee 1990, 63–64), the importance of revelation as essential part of the soteriological process cannot be denied, since it supplies the answer to the soteriological question: "Where is God?" The answer to this question is the answer to where and how salvation is to be found.[6]

The answer of John is clear: God can only be met through faith in Jesus, and the Spirit is witness to this. Things are no longer the same; they have changed, because God's Messiah, his Son, has come (3:16; 4:25–26) to make the Father and his will known (1:18). The conflict about the locus of God is fought on the battlefield of the Christology (10:7–10; 14:6). There the true decisions will be and are made (14:6).

4.1. Why Was Change (A New Soteriological Route) Necessary?

Before we continue, we should ask why it was suddenly necessary to change an established religion like that of the Jews in the way Jesus did by means of a new revelation from God? There are some clues given, the first appearing in the Prologue.

a) The first verses of this Gospel imply that the world, even the Jews (1:9–11), needed light and life (1:5–13). There was a *need* for salvation.
b) Then there were the *expectations* of an agent of God who was to come. These expectations, which the disciples of Jesus shared with the other Jews, and are based on the Scriptures, are mentioned prominently in the first chapter of this Gospel (1:19–22, 25, 45). It is assumed that everybody expected God to send his Messiah or prophet. That is why the Jews investigated Jesus and "measured" him against the Scriptures (7:52). Linked to the investiga-

[6] When dealing with the soteriology, focus often falls on individual aspects like the ὑπέρ-formulas, rebirth, life, the Lamb, the role of the cross, or related aspects. See, for example, Nielsen (1999, 237ff); Malan (1989, 13–15). The larger picture is often missed.

tion of the Scriptures was their awareness that the "new Moses" or prophet should be able to do extra-ordinary signs. For this reason Jesus is confronted with providing signs (2:18; 6:30). The numerous references to the Old Testament in this Gospel confirm the idea that the Christians saw the Jesus events and their own position in line with these Scriptures.

c) God responded to these expectations through the *loving* act of sending his Son (3:16). This should be seen as an act of pure *grace*, which makes it possible to see the glory of God (1:14, 16, 17—see Van der Watt 1996, 311–332). Divine initiative lies behind these new salvific events. It is his gift to this world (3:16; 4:10) according to his *plan* (see, for instance, the references to the *hour*—2:4; 8:20; 12:23; 16:4, 32; 17:1, etc., or to the cup that the Father prepared for Jesus—18:11). Richter (1977, 58–62) strongly emphasizes the will of the Father and his command in this regard.

In short, the reason lies in the grace and love of God himself, who fulfils his promises made in the Scriptures. God said he was going to do it, and now He did this through Jesus.

4.2. *The Main Soteriological Issue: Where Is God To Be Found?*

This leads onto the question: How could such claims of change and new revelation have been made in a credible way in an established and well-organized religious community like that of the Jews? The argument will be developed as follows: The *claims* made about Jesus as Revealer will receive attention first, and then it will be explained how the claims are *substantiated*. A discussion of the soteriological *consequences* and *results* of these claims will follow.

4.2.1. *The Claim: Jesus Reveals God, the Father*

The claims of Jesus are clear: "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (14:9), and "When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me" (12:44–45; see also 1:18). With the arrival of Jesus the locus of the presence of God changed. God, the Father, will be where Jesus is, and if his opponents do not accept him, they are without God! This is indeed a radical claim, but nevertheless a central claim on which the argument of the disciples of Jesus against their opponents rests (17:8).

This leads us to the question: Why specifically is Jesus the sole Revealer of God, the Father? What makes him so special? The answer, of course, is because of his relationship with the Father. For our purposes only a brief exposition of this majestic theme is necessary to illustrate the point, since literature on this Gospel is flooded with detailed descriptions on these themes (Ashton 1994, 71–89).

a) There are claims of (divine) *locality*. Jesus claims: "You (his opponents) are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world" (8:23). Instead of a birth narrative, the incarnation (1:14) of the pre-existent Word (1:1; 8:58) underlines the divine origin of Jesus, as the One who was sent by his Father from above (heaven—3:13; 3:31–32; 16:28). That is why He has special knowledge of the Father (1:18), or as he formulates it: "I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen" (3:11; 6:46).
b) There are claims of a *unique relationship* between the Father and the Son (Schnackenburg 1991, 285–286), which obviously puts Jesus in the privileged position of being able to know the Father and consequently to reveal God, the Father. This unique relationship is expressed in different ways, for instance, through the *Immanenzformeln* (10:38; 14:20; 17:21–23; see Borig 1967, 199–236; Schnackenburg 1982, 99; Scholtissek 2000) or expressions that Jesus and the Father are one (10:30), or Jesus' position as the unique Son (τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ—3:16) who is at the Father's side (1:18), the only one who has seen the Father (6:46). Although there is unity, the difference between Father and Son is always maintained (Theobald 1992, 62; Kammler 2000, 231–232).
c) Based on this unique relationship, claims are made that the Father has *functionally equipped* Jesus to serve as his unique Agent, who will reveal the presence of God. God, the Father, "educated" Jesus to be able to do whatever the Father does (5:19—see Schenke 1998, 445ff), *inter alia* to give life and judge (5:19–29; 10:17–18), things that are the prerogative of God alone. The Father has shown Jesus everything (5:19–20) and has given everything into his hands (3:35; 17:2, 7), and has put all things under his power and authority (13:3; 17:2, 7); these are all references to the absolute power of Jesus to bring salvation (see Richter 1977, 58). Now Jesus, as the life, light and truth (see Schweizer 1965; Cebulj 2000; Williams 2000, 303 on the Johannine ἐγω εἰμι pronouncements),

has received the command from the Father to give eternal life to this world (3:16; 12:50; 17:2).

d) Based on his preparation, Jesus, the Son, has received the command and *mission* to bring life to the world as Revealer of God (3:16; 6:40; 12:49–50), something Schnackenburg (1991, 287) regards as central to the Son Christology. Jesus does what pleases the Father (8:29; 4:34; 17:4)—he does nothing on his own (4:24; 12:49; 17:4). (On mission practices in ancient times and in John's Gospel, see Bühner 1977; Schenke 1998, 445ff; Borgen 1983, 124). "For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it" (12:49). That is why he is also prepared to drink the cup the Father has prepared for him (18:11; Rahner 1998, 62–72).

e) On the basis of the above, it can be claimed that Jesus is the bringer of the *revelation* and *knowledge* from and about God. (Wisdom motifs in John are well known in the literature on this Gospel—see Boismard 1993, 133). Titles like Rabbi, Teacher (1:38; 3:2), and Prophet (4:19) express his function. As God's Agent he reveals, declares, and witnesses about what He has seen or heard in heaven (3:11, 32–34; 4:26–27; 8:26), and gives the world the word of God (17:14), that brings salvation (4:41–42; 5:24, 28; 8:51), or judgment (12:47–48).

These Christological *claims* are central to this Gospel and explain how and why the road of truth and life, in other words of God's presence, follows the way Jesus indicates (14:6–14), and not the way his opponents follow. The question arises: Are there any proofs that can sustain these claims?

4.2.2. *The Claims of Jesus Substantiated*

Obviously, his opponents do not accept these claims (8:48, 52; 9:24; 10:20–21; 19:30). What proof could Jesus bring that He is indeed the legitimate "door to salvation", while all others are "thieves and robbers" (10:7–10)? These claims are substantiated *inter alia* through forensic language (see Chapter 5 or 8) and events (see the cross-events). Due to a lack of space and the wide scope of the forensic motifs in this Gospel, it cannot be discussed in detail, but see Lincoln's substantial monograph (2000) on the lawsuit motif in the Fourth Gospel, or Neyrey (1996), or Van der Watt and Voges-Bonthuys (2000, 387–405) for relevant information.

In addressing the problem of legitimisation, especially in Chapter 5, several witnesses are mentioned:

a) Jesus mentions the witness of *John the Baptist* (5:33), the man sent by God (1:6; 3:27–28), but immediately indicates that he has weightier witnesses (5:36). Nevertheless, he mentions the witness of John (1:23, 26, 29–36; 3:27–30, 31–36?) to them, "that you may be saved" (5:34)—by accepting John's witness, they will obviously accept Jesus and thus receive salvation. Indeed, for some the witness of John the Baptist seems to have been enough (10:40–42).
b) In 5:37 (see also 8:18), Jesus mentions that the *Father* testifies about Him. His voice is heard from heaven (12:28).
c) In 5:38, Jesus says that the same *Scriptures* that his opponents study so diligently to find life, are the Scriptures that testify about Him (5:39). Moses, as well as the other prophets, wrote about Jesus (1:45; 5:46). Isaiah saw the glory of Jesus and spoke about him (12:41—see Menken 1996).
d) The *Spirit*, descending on Jesus, was the sign for John that Jesus is truly the Son of God (1:34). Thus Jesus will also baptize with the Spirit (1:32–33; 3:8–10), which will serve as proof of his divine Sonship (1:33; 7:39; 15:26; 20:22).
e) His *deeds* legitimise the claims of Jesus, as he says in 14:10–11, "Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves (διὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτά)." In 5:36 Jesus formulates it as follows: "For the very work (τὰ ἔργα) that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me."

We need to pay a little more attention to the *deeds* of Jesus, which culminate in his glorification (the cross-events). Jesus frequently reflects on his own death.[7] In 8:28 he remarks, "When you lift up (ὑψώσητε) the Son of Man, then you will know that I am (τότε γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι)." The cross events, or (symbolically—Barrett 1978, 214, 343) being lifted up, are described as the *locus* of the *revelation* of the *identity* of Jesus (Carson 1991, 345; Neyrey 1996, 119–120; Kelber 1996, 137). The question is, "Why?"

[7] See, for instance, 2:18–22; 3:14–15; 8:28–29; 10:17–18; 12:23–26, 31–33; 14:30–31; 16:31–33; etc.

The main lines of the argument may be presented as follows: in explaining his unique relationship with the Father, Jesus claims in 5:19ff that he was "educated" by the Father—and what he was taught (shown) by the Father was how to give life and to judge as the Father does (5:21–22), things that were the prerogative of the living God (Gnilka 1989, 130; Thompson 2001, 55), but which he gave to his Son (5:21). As Thompson (2001, 54), puts it: "If there is any 'bridge' between divine and human identity or function, the bridge must be built and authorized by God." The implication is clear: the ultimate proof for the divine identity of Jesus would be to illustrate his divine power over life and death. Jesus underlines this in 10:17–18, where he states that he will lay down his life and take it up by himself (10:17–18). The point Thompson makes is that Jesus is *actively* involved in his own resurrection, which proves that He is the resurrection and eternal life (11:25–26). This activity of giving life, even taking his own life back, substantiates his claims that he is from God. Where else would he get the power to do that?

At his resurrection, Jesus proves his divine identity by raising himself from death and appearing to the disciples. By taking up his life again, the historical proof (for the narrator) is given by Jesus for his claims, and Thomas acknowledges this in his confession (20:28; Carson 1991, 657–658). Within the confines of this narrative, this confession of Jesus' divine identity would not have been possible without the reality of the cross-events (Stibbe 1994, 69).

Through the cross-events the divine identity of Jesus is revealed and the crucial question answered. Thus the soteriological riddle, namely, "Where God is", is solved. In and through Jesus God is present, as is clear from his different "witnesses".

In this light, it can be understood why *revelation, inter alia* through the cross-events forms a corner stone of the soteriological process. The salvific power of the cross lies in its revelatory power.[8]

This remark should be understood in the correct perspective. The basic issue being addressed does not concern the way in which individual sins are reconciled or cleansed by the blood of Jesus, or related

[8] We cannot go into detail here, but the other *deeds* of Jesus also carry the same message. See the argument of the blind man (9:32–33). Nicodemus concludes that Jesus must be from God, since "no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him" (3:2). The sickness and death of Lazarus is to glorify the Son (11:4, see also 15).

points. The issue rather has to do with where God is to be found, which led to conflicting answers. The mistake should therefore not be made to conclude from this particular focus and the absence of terminology or references to blood, sacrifices, reconciliation or expiation of sins[9] that he was either unfamiliar with these soteriological traditions or that he rejected them. These conclusions are drawn when the soteriology of the Gospel is read in abstraction.

Abundant efforts have been made in the past to show (obviously against Bultmann and his companions) that there are signs of other functions of the cross-events (for example, Sevenster 1946, 240; Coetzee 1990, 62–64). Obviously, that is correct, but it should immediately be acknowledged that these ideas are not central to the main argument of the Gospel. This does not imply that John stands in a unique or separate Christian tradition—it rather illustrates that his soteriology is not formulated in an absolute a-historical manner. His soteriological message is formulated with a specific situation in mind, and this situation directly influenced his choices of soteriological terminology and themes.

At this point it would be in order to provide a brief survey of other ways in which the cross events are related to soteriological motifs.

a) John often refers to the cross events as *glorification* (7:39; 12:16, 23; 13:31, 32; 17:1, 5—Richter 1977, 61; Coetzee 1990, 63). The aorist imperative form of the verb refers specifically to the time of the cross-events (for instance 12:28; 17:1, 5). The following question now needs our attention: how can an event of death and suffering, which is a "*skandalon*" to many, glorify Jesus?

Although the term δόξα (and its derivates) is used in several and even diverse ways in classical Greek and Jewish literature, the way John employs the term shows direct affinity to the Hebrew use of כבד. Von Rad shows that כבד was *inter alia* used to refer to the

[9] Terminology of suffering (πάσχω) or reconciliation (for example, ἱλασμός, λύτρον, καταλλαγή) is avoided and even the word group σταυροώ is used sparingly in the passion narrative. References to sweat like blood or a prayer of agony in Gethsemane are absent. Judas does not betray Jesus with a kiss, but Jesus gives himself up in order to drink the cup his Father has prepared for Him (18:1–11; 12:27–28). Pauline terms like humiliation (Phil 2:8), weakness (2 Cor 13:4), or curse (Gal 3:13) are also absent.

active acknowledgement of the position of honour of somebody based on his importance as can be seen from his person/status or actions (Von Rad 1974, 238; Cf. also Kittel 1974, 248).

In this Gospel, the emphasis in the use of δόξα and derivates sometimes falls more on the "honour paid" to a person, and other times more on the "importance" of a person. Δόξα is not used to refer to something visual like brilliance, but rather to a position of honour based on what a person is or does in relation to the people who acknowledge him (it is not only used of God, but also of ordinary people—5:44; 12:42–43). When Jesus asks his Father to glorify him on the cross, he actually asks of the Father to make His true identity and status visibly known, as the divine One who was sent by the Father. Both the passive (cf. 7:39; 11:4; 12:16; 12:23; 13:31) and active uses (cf. 8:54; 12:28; 13:32) of the verb suggest that the Son should be glorified by the active participation of the Father. The glory results when the identity of Jesus becomes clear through the cross events. The unity between the Father and the Son is confirmed and, consequently, his status and therefore his glory are revealed—the motifs of glorification and revelation are intimately linked in this Gospel.

b) Another question focuses on the use of the word ὑπέρ, since it is mainly used in contexts where one person dies for another.[10] Is the death of Jesus seen as substitutionary? Only in 11:50–52 is ὑπέρ used without a doubt in the sense of substitution. The context indicates that somebody is dying in the place of another person who was supposed to or would have died (Brown 1971, 440). In 10:11, 15, where the shepherd dies for his sheep and 15:13 where Jesus dies for his friends, might be interpreted in a substitutionary way, but not necessarily (it need not be "in their place" but can also be "because of them"; see Becker 1981, ad loc.).

Carson interprets the use of ὑπέρ in 6:51 in terms of the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus. He concludes, ". . . since it is for the life of the world, his (Jesus') sacrifice is vicarious" (Carson 1991, 295). He then links these verses with the Lamb of God in 1:29, 36. However, if the use of ὑπέρ in these verses is carefully scrutinized,

[10] See 6:51; 10:11, 15; 11:50–52; 13:37–38; 15:13; 18:14. It does not refer to the death of someone in only three cases (1:30; 11:4; 17:19).

the interpretation of Carson becomes questionable. Ὑπέρ is, for instance, syntactically not linked to persons, but to life. The expression does not want to emphasise that Jesus gives his life for people, but wants to focus on the purpose of his death, namely life for the world. This need not refer to his sacrifice, but within the larger framework of the Gospel, this could refer to the revelatory power of his death (see 2:22; 12:16).

The sanctification of Jesus in 17:19 ὑπέρ his disciples might also be referring to his death (Richter 1977, 63 argues that the meaning of this phrase "ist umstritten", but see Sevenster 1946, 237; Barrett 1978, 511; Schnackenburg 1982, 187). The advantages for the disciples is expressed in the following ἵνα phrase. Both Schnackenburg (1982, 187–188) and Brown (1972, 766–767) link this reference to the sacrificial death of Jesus in the light of the Old Testament references to animals and even priests that were sanctified. The death of Jesus could then be seen in the light of a priestly offering. If this interpretation is valid, then this is indeed a reference to the sacrificial death of Jesus. It, however, remains a reference and not a direct and explicit statement. This would then support our argument that John does not deny other ways of reflecting on the death of Jesus, but that he has a specific soteriological focus.

We might, therefore, conclude that although John does not emphasize or focus on substitution or sacrifice, there are some insinuations in that direction. However, these references do not come into focus at all. These are secondary to the revelatory function of the cross events.

c) John the Baptist calls Jesus the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of this world" (1:29, 36). The link between sin and the Lamb in this expression strongly suggests sacrificial atonement for sin. No consensus, however, exists among scholars on the interpretation of this expression. Nevertheless, within the context of the Old Testament sacrificial traditions and the reception of these traditions in the New Testament, the link between Lamb and sacrifice seems natural (Bultmann 1984, 406). Whether John has the Paschal lamb in mind, or perhaps a more generic view of lambs in general that are sacrificed, is not sure. How sin is to be taken away is also not explained in these verses. Exegetically the following is of importance. This remark by John the Baptist is made at a prominent place in the Gospel, but without sufficient clarity as to the meaning, relationship and

functioning of the elements mentioned. It keeps exegetes guessing. I would suggest that John was fully aware of sacrificial traditions, but it was not his focus in this Gospel. He mentions or refers to it, but does not develop it in any way. If one might have asked him, "What happens to our individual sins?" he could have answered, "Christ atoned us through his blood." This view can be inter-textually substantiated by referring to 1 John 2:1–2 and 4:9–10, where these issues are raised and answered in these terms (See Van der Watt 1995, 147–151 for a more detailed treatment).

d) The reference to the seed that dies and brings forth plenty of fruit implies that the death of Jesus holds many advantages. This line of though is, however, not developed in these verses, but rather the necessity for the disciples to follow and serve Jesus (12:25–26). Within the larger framework of the Gospel, the advantages of Jesus' death should be interpreted in relation to the revelation of his identity rather than to sacrifice or some similar theme. There is no indication that the latter is implied here.

e) The three occurrences of ὑψόω (3:14; 8:28; 12:32), in which the symbolical potential of the word ὑψόω is utilized, are also significant. As Jesus is lifted up on the cross, his movement back to his Father and away from the *cosmos* starts. He, for example, draws all the believers to him, which implies that they are dualistically separated from this world to be with the Light and Life (12:31–32; Dodd 1960, 379). Their salvation implies not being part of this world any longer, as is stated in 15:19 or 17:14, 16. Thus the "lifting up" becomes symbolic of their salvation from the power of the ruler of this world and the consequent judgement of the prince of this world (12:31), from "up high". It must be recognised that the way in which this "drawing" occurs, and therefore the modus of salvation is simply stated as the "lifting up", or the cross-events. Whether this happens through revelation or sacrifice, or something else is not stated. The context of this Gospel as a whole should assist in drawing these types of conclusions.

In 3:15, God's salvific presence amongst his people is powerfully illustrated through the tradition of the copper snake (Num 21:4–9). It is also a godly imperative (δεῖ) that Jesus should be lifted up on the cross in order to illustrate the loving and saving presence of God amongst people (3:14–15; see Hanson 1991, 42ff). It is God's plan that believers might receive eternal life (3:15).

On the cross the *identity* of the Father's obedient agent will be revealed through him being lifted up (8:28), in other words, through the cross events (Beasley-Murray 1987, ad loc.). This should be linked to his glory, as Beasley-Murray (1987, ad loc.) illustrates. The theme of the revelation of Jesus' identity is in focus here, which links this verse, and possibly the other uses of ὑψοώ, with the broad theme of revelation as salvation.

By way of a small detour, brief attention should be paid to a peculiarity of this Gospel, namely, to the role of the *devil*. Contrary to the synoptic gospels, there is no temptation in the desert, nor any exorcisms by Jesus (Twelftree 1998, ad loc.), although he himself is accused of having a demon (7:20; 8:48, 52; 10:20–21). The devil is, however, described as the *father* (8:44) of unbelievers and a *prince* of this world (ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου—12:31; 14:30; 16:11. See Elgvin 2000, ad loc. and Hamilton 1997, ad loc. for Jewish material on this term), both social terms indicating group orientation. In all three contexts where the devil is called the prince of this world, the dominating themes are the victory of Jesus over this prince through the cross-events and the consequent powerlessness and the presence of judgement over this prince and everything that belongs to him. What are the soteriological implications? By overpowering this father and prince, Jesus actually overpowers his whole family and group, which implies social re-description of where the real power and true salvation lie. This is an ironic comment on the apparent position of power held by the dominating group of the opponents and even by Pilate, who crucified Jesus and scattered his followers (16:32). However, the real power lies with God and will become apparent as Jesus takes up his life again (10:17–18; 19:11).

On the other hand, although the devil is downplayed in this Gospel, he is nevertheless pictured as standing behind the physical opposition against Jesus and remains the source of evil deeds and words. He is trying to destroy Jesus and his mission by working in and through people (Twelftree 1998, ad loc.). He is the one who enters and prompts Judas to betray Jesus (13:2, 27). Judas is even called a devil (6:70). Perhaps the best-known description is that those who do not follow Jesus are children of the devil (8:44). They learn from their father and do what he does (8:38). Although the devil does not hold any power over Jesus and is defeated and cast out (12:31), he remains powerful enough in the interim period, from now to the last day (12:48), for Jesus to pray that the Father should pro-

tect the believers from the evil (ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ. See 15:18–25 or 16:2 for descriptions of his influence).

4.3. *Reception of Salvation*

At this point in the argument, it has been established that Jesus is indeed the Agent of God, the Son who was sent by the Father. This can be substantiated in different ways, as was just argued. He is the way (17:6), the door to green pastures (10:9), the One who brings life in abundance (10:10), the Saviour of the world (4:42).

The next question is: How does one come to green pastures, that is, to salvation? In 1:12–13 it is stated: "Yet to all who received him, to those who *believed* in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children . . . *born* of God." The two main motifs for attaining salvation are linked here, namely, *faith* and spiritual *birth.* In the rest of the Gospel these motifs are used in their own contexts. In 3:3 we, for example, read: "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is *born* again" (see also 3:5), and in 3:16 (and many other places) it is stated, "Whoever *believes* in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (See also 3:36). Since the attainment of salvation is described in terms of faith and birth, these two motifs will now receive attention.

4.3.1. *Faith as Means of Attaining Salvation*

Faith (the verb πιστεύω, with its 98 occurrences) is not defined in a single verse in this Gospel, but the full extent of what is meant is developed gradually. Different contexts should be read in relation to each other in order to achieve a full indication of what is intended. This is not the place to enter into a detailed discussion on the different ways in which πιστεύω is used.[11] (See Schnackenburg 1972, 558–575, or Kysar 1993, 78–96, for detailed discussions. For our purposes there is no need to repeat their discussions here or to rework the material.) In general, πιστεύω is used to indicate acceptance of something or somebody, with different motives and existential

[11] The word is used in a variety of ways, for instance, to accept (3:12), to believe in a person or in his name (Jesus—usually with εἰς or ἐν; also God—5:24), to believe in objects like words or Scripture, not to entrust yourself (2:24), simply to believe (because of somebody's word or signs).

commitments. An analysis of the uses of πιστεύω shows that salvific faith involves full acceptance of the message of Jesus as well as his person, which includes his identity and his origin from God as Agent. Having said this, the nature of faith still stays vague. What are the true dimensions and consequences of this acceptance? This is an important question, since not every use of πιστεύω in this Gospel refers to salvific faith.

I now turn to few contexts where faith does not lead to salvation, and eventually conclude with a positive description of faith.

The first complex containing particular usage of the term illustrates that πιστεύω is used to describe acceptance of Jesus, but for wrong reasons and without an adequate change in attitude towards oneself as well as towards Jesus. This faith does not seem to be salvific, but expresses a positive attitude towards Jesus. Examples are:

- In 2:22–25 we find people who believe in Jesus' name because they saw the miraculous signs he performed (although signs do not have this effect on everybody—12:37). Jesus, however, does not react in an overwhelming positive way: "But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men" (2:24). As Beasley-Murray (1987, ad loc.) has pointed out, the inadequacy of faith based on signs alone is emphasized in this episode. He argues that these verses do not imply that faith based on signs is spurious, but that it is the "first step towards Jesus". Salvation is not ensured. One cannot simply believe in Jesus because he is a miracle worker. There is more to it. These people have not appreciated Jesus' full significance and therefore complete commitment is lacking, as the story of Nicodemus in Chapter 3 also implies.
- According to 6:14–15, 25–27, certain people want to follow Jesus simply for the sake of the gifts and benefits they can receive. This type of faith is not yet salvific faith, although it points in the right direction. However, where a self-seeking attitude is linked to faith, that faith seems to be inadequate, as Kysar (1993, 81–82) points out.
- The danger of a self-seeking attitude is reiterated in a different way in 12:42–43. Again, people who believe are found, but they do not want to confess Jesus openly, since "they loved praise from men more than praise from God" (12:43). They are afraid of being thrown out of the synagogue and this prevents them from confirming their faith openly. That is why their faith cannot come to maturity (Beasley-Murray 1987, ad loc.). In 6:60–71, believers

(called disciples) are not willing to follow Jesus unconditionally (6:66), because his teachings are too difficult for them (6:60), and they decide to turn home, which counts for a decision against Jesus (6:66). A self-seeking attitude that prevents a full and unconditional confession, like Peter's, backed by staying with Jesus when others leave (6:68–69), hinders faith to be salvific.

A second complex, where faith seems to be inadequate, is found in 8:30–47. Jesus speaks to the Jews about his mission and "even as he spoke, many put their faith in him" (8:30); Jesus continues to talk to these *believers* (8:31—see Beasley-Murray 1987, ad loc. for interpretation problems here). His first words to them are illuminating: "If you hold to my teaching (μείνητε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ ἐμῷ), you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (8:31–32). The implication of these words seems clear: faith cannot just be intellectual, but must be existential, influencing one's deeds. "Remaining in" the "words of Jesus" is an expression indicating full acceptance of the message to the extent that it becomes one's own ideas that determine one's life and actions. That is why Jesus can link "freedom" to such an acceptance of his words—it is life changing. In terms of the metaphor of freedom, it refers to a social reorientation with existential effects. One cannot believe without doing as the children of the Father do (8:39–42), and that implies becoming a child of God and showing it in one's behaviour. The argument in Chapter 8 is, however, that although they believe, they do not live as children of God and must therefore belong to the family of Satan.

The third and probably the most telling and illustrative complex is found in Chapter 9, in the story of the physical and spiritual healing of the blind man. This is the only narrative were Jesus is absent and somebody else is defending him. The nature of the defence is important. The healed man does not only understand the "theological" implications of his healing, namely, that Jesus must be from God (see his argument in 9:27–33), but also defends this insight to the point of loosing his social embeddedness.[12] But, there is a twist in the story. Even though the man defends Jesus to the point of

[12] In a group orientated society social embeddedness was crucial, since it basically determined a person's whole life—one's status, economic system and backup, the terms in which one defines oneself.

loosing basically everything, he is not saved, not before he accepts the true identity of Jesus (9:38). This is to illustrate that acceptance without works is not adequate, neither is work without the acceptance of the identity of Jesus. Active, self-sacrificing defence of Jesus, because of a conviction that He is from God and a consequent acceptance of his divine identity because of faith implies salvation. Intellectual acceptance and concrete, existential behaviour goes hand in hand.

In a nutshell: Salvific faith is a self-sacrificing, intellectual, and existential acceptance of the message and person of Jesus to the extent that it completely transforms a person's thoughts and deeds in accordance to this message and leads to an obedient life of doing what a child of God should do. That is why Blank (1964, 129) is correct in describing salvific faith as "eine totale, das gesamte menschliche Sein ergreifende und bestimmende Grundhaltung."

An important remark remains to be made: It should also be noted that faith *is* not salvation. It is the means of attaining salvation. It opens the person up towards Jesus, the source of salvation, the Giver of eternal life.

4.3.2. *Salvation: Being Born into the Family of God*

4.3.2.1. Birth of God

The relation between faith and birth is expressed in 1:12–13: "Yet to all who received him (Jesus), to those who *believed* in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-children . . . *born* of God." Those who believe, or receive, are born of God to receive eternal life (salvation). The conclusion in the previous section is significant at this point: Faith is not salvation, but indeed leads to salvation. Salvation, again, is expressed in terms of the birth of God in 1:12–13. (See also 3:3, 5). If we, therefore, read elsewhere that "whoever *believes* in him (Jesus) shall not perish but have *eternal life*" (3:16—see 3:36; 5:24), it should be understood that faith is translated to life through *birth*. Therefore: if you *believe* you are *born* of God, and those *born* of God have eternal *life*. By being born as a child of God (1:12–13), a person is able to participate in the spiritual world of God (3:1–8), having eternal life (3:15–16 *et al.*), which enables him or her to experience this life with God in all its dimensions.

Elsewhere, I (Van der Watt 2000) have argued extensively that it is crucial to recognize the metaphorical nature of terminology like

"birth of God", "eternal life", "children of God", "God becoming our Father", and that these concepts are directly related to *family imagery*. These terms are used in conjunction to form part of a larger network of metaphors related to family imagery. Therefore, salvation is expressed metaphorically in terms of the central social reality of an ancient family as John reconstructed it in his Gospel (see Van der Watt 2000; Osiek and Balch 1997).

John uses the imagery of an ordinary, earthly family to illustrate by analogy what happens to a believer when he or she comes to faith and is born again. Since *birth* is the basic constitutive element in becoming part of a family, it serves as an effective metaphor to activate family imagery in the Gospel (Van der Watt 2000; Turner 1976, 276; Corell 1958, 196–197). Just as every person has been born into this earthly world, every Christian is born into the "world of God". God is the source of birth through the Spirit. The result is being a child of God, which implies that a person has the ability to partake in the spiritual things, belonging to the family of God. As a member of the family of God, a child will act according to the will of God, who is his or her Father. That is why "rebirth" plays such an important role in the Gospel (1:13; 3:3–8). Through this spiritual birth, one's eyes are opened to the spiritual presence and reality of God. (For a detailed discussion, see Van der Watt 2000). God is spirit (4:24) and being born of the Spirit, a person becomes spiritually sensitive (3:6) and able to exist in the *family* the kingdom of God, or the *family* of the King.

An ancient Mediterranean person did not function in isolation, but as part of an οἶκος (Roberts 1984, 62). *Birth*, as central event in family circles, implied becoming part of that with everything that it involved, especially on a social level. According to ancient documents, the responsibilities of a child towards his/her parents were linked to the privilege of birth (see Golden 1990, 102; Philo *Decal.* 118), while the parents also had responsibilities of loving and caring for their child. Birth was an important means of determining one's identity (see Josephus *Ant.* 4.8.39 §289) as well as honour. In short, birth indicated social position (Malina and Neyrey 1991, 28). The bloodline into which a person was born and the family in which he or she was raised, played crucial roles in the eventual expected behaviour of that person (Neyrey 1995, 143).

The act or moment of salvation is expressed in metaphorical terms as being born into *the family of God*, or simply *of God*. By becoming

a part of the (fictive) family of God, a person is therefore resocialized in terms of that family. This new society (God's family) becomes the basic and determinative society towards which a person orientates him or herself. This resocialization is envisaged as becoming alive to God, becoming able to appreciate the spiritual reality, becoming able to function within a new social and existential framework, as is represented by Jesus. Salvation indeed leads to an anti-society (see Petersen 1993, 80ff).

4.3.2.2. Life as Existence in the Family of God Because of Birth
Within this metaphorical net based on family life, it is obvious that birth will result in life, and that is how John actually develops the metaphor further (see Van der Watt 2000 for detailed discussion). Ζωή in this Gospel is not a biological term (which is ψυχή), but a religious term. Having life implies being enabled to consciously and existentially partake in the reality of the family of God. To live in this ordinary world means being able to eat, drink, enter into relations with others, act, and obey. The same applies to eternal life. Receiving this life through birth means that a person becomes able to participate in the heavenly reality of God. He or she becomes a child of God within the family of God—through birth—which implies participation in all the associated rights. In this heavenly reality, believers can act, enter relations, and experience the heavenly reality in the form of peace and love. Having eternal life, therefore, means that we can participate fully in the familial reality of God. Being born into that family, and thus having eternal life in that family, draws new social borders for a person. Although believers are not taken out of their physical communities, another family, namely the figurative family of God, determines their lives within those communities.

Let us briefly remind ourselves of the thesis that was stated in the beginning, that the concept of salvation is coined to address the conflict between the disciples of Moses and the disciples of Jesus. What is called salvation, as explained above, implies a movement from the group of Moses to the groups of Jesus. The people who move might loose their physical families or their social support systems like the blind man, but they gain the family of God.

The *moment* of *salvation* could therefore be described in terms of *being born into a spiritual family* and thus receiving eternal life. This brings us to an important point. Eternal life is often described as the term that expresses salvation in this Gospel. However, the birth

results in eternal life. It should therefore be argued, depending on one's definition of salvation, that birth describes the moment salvation takes place and that eternal life is the soteriological result of the soteriological event of the birth of God. Eternal life describes the result of salvation, which is, being born again.

Where does faith fit into the picture? Faith describes an attitude of complete and unconditional acceptance of Jesus, impacting fully on one's behaviour. It positions a person in full acceptance and obedience before Jesus, the mediator of life. This "positioning" alone does not make a person a member of the family of God, but is an important requirement to receive birth from above. Being born from above opens the way into the kingdom (3:3, 5). Christ is the mediator in this process, since just as the Father has given him life, he gives life to his disciples (6:57). Only when you are born of God, do you receive the right to be a child of God (1:12–13). Faith and birth go hand in hand, but are not the same. Faith describes a person's attitude and reaction, while birth describes the moment of change, or salvation, flowing from the faith of that person. God, and him alone, gives birth.

A remark needs to be made about the alternative to salvation, namely judgment and death. In 5:24 a clue for understanding the metaphorical nature of life and death is provided. This is what Jesus wants to save people or the world from. The believer passes from *death* to life (μεταβέβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωήν—see Jer. 17:13; Ps. 36:10. Barrett 1978, 260; Newman & Nida 1980, 155; Brown 1971, 218). The condition for moving from spiritual death to life is to hear and believe. This implies that a person who is "spiritually dead" can indeed hear and believe (Pribnow 1934, 56). Death is "an inability to act and relate as a living one" and spiritual death links that to a state of alienation from God. This explains the use of "judgment" in 5:24 (καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται). God protects his own (e.g. 10:29), while those who do not belong to him (are not in a relationship with him) are judged (12:47–48). Those who do not believe will suffer the consequences of the wrath of God (3:36), apart from the fact that they will not see eternal life, as Schnackenburg (1972, 427) says: "Das 'Gericht' ist mit dem Unglauben *ipso facto* eingetreten" (Mussner 1952, 98; Blank 1964, 88). People will die in their sin without God.

4.3.3. *Salvation as Re-socialization*

Being born into a family, and thus becoming a member of that family, implies a new identity, new social relations, a new status. This is the essence of the description of salvation in this Gospel. The new family of God stands in contrast to any earthly social associations or groups. Being born into that family, and thus having eternal life in that family, draws new social borders for a person. Salvation indeed implies a total re-socialization within the family of God. Elsewhere, I have argued that except for references to the mother of Jesus, all the references to physical families or similar social orders are negative (Van der Watt 2001). The real and true social order to belong to is the figurative family of God. The believer must obey that Father, act according to those rules, love those brothers and sisters. Although the believers are not taken out of their physical communities, another family, namely the figurative family of God, determines their lives within those communities. In this sense, they form an anti-society, which is described in filial terms.

Let us remind ourselves of the thesis stated in the beginning, that the concept of salvation is coined to address the conflict between the disciples of Moses and the disciples of Jesus. In this Gospel, the Jews seem to have a thorough and intact group organization, which, from a human point of view, seems to be socially dominant—it is they who order, kill, or organize. These actions of the opponents have shown that they do not know or have God, and Jesus makes them aware of their sin of rejecting the revelation of God and therefore God himself (9:41; 15:22, 24). The deeds of Jesus, on the other hand, especially his death and resurrection, have proven that the Father is with him and that he comes from the Father. Salvation from the ideological perspective of this Gospel, therefore, implies a movement from the seemingly stronger social group of Moses to the family of Jesus. It involves a complete and existential resocialization. People who move might loose their physical families or their social support systems, like the blind man, but they gain the family of God. This filial concept is, however, very powerful, since it represents the basic social order in society. Why this is important to note, is because it motivates and describes the anti-society of Christians against the disciples of Moses. This figurative "anti-society", represented by the family of God, is equally well organized, but qualitatively on a higher level, since it is the family (group) of God.

The basic blows in the conflict and resulting arguments are thrown on the social level. The opponents of Jesus exclude them from their social support system, the synagogue, as the paradigmatic narrative of the blind man illustrates, while the Christians argue that their opponents are excluded from the real support system, namely, the family of God. Salvation is a matter of social identity.

4.4. *A Family is Fine, But What about Religious Structures?*

In our earlier analysis of the Jews, it became clear that the structures, within which they practiced their religion, were important as part of their religious experience. Jesus is not pictured as being negative towards the temple or Scriptures—he rather tries to protect the honour of his Father at "his Father's house" (2:16) and says that the Scriptures testify about him. He also acknowledges the need for purification (13:10). However, Jesus does bring a change. He reinterprets these cultic and religious aspects and thus lays a new soteriological emphasis. As Corell (1958, 52) has pointed out, "it was not Jesus' purpose to establish a new non-liturgical religion as a substitute for the old cult. Rather St John saw the old cult as attaining its fulfilment and perfection in and through Christ." Jesus becomes the centre of the cult. The same language is used to indicate Jesus' function, namely, he is the temple (2:21), he cleanses people (2:7; 13:10; 15:2), is the Lamb (1:29, 36 and probably Chapters 18–19), the Scriptures witness about him (5:39–40) and are indeed fulfilled in him, since the prophets spoke of him, his community replaces the need for the synagogue (9:34–38; 12:42). This emphasizes the continuity, but also discontinuity.

Nobody can, therefore, claim to find salvation in religious structures, or claim that religious structures give them any advantage. The structures are not important, but Jesus is. Without Jesus these structures are worthless. The structures only obtain their meaning in relation to Jesus. Sitting in the temple next to purification jars with the Law on one's lap means nothing if it is done without God; And God is to be found in Jesus.

In this way the issues about the cultic and other religious matters are solved. The Christians did not take the cultic aspects or even the temple and sacrifice (obviously before the temple was destroyed) away from the Jews. They spiritualised it in Jesus and thus gave it

a new and reinterpreted meaning. These cultic phenomena continued; not as the opponents practised it, but as Jesus represented it. He was now their temple and Lamb, and cleanser. In this way the opponents could not criticise the disciples of Jesus for not having the traditional religious "mechanisms" of the people of God.

5. Conclusion

The soteriology of this Gospel is not formulated in an abstract, a-historical manner. It is formulated to address the specific conflict the Johannine community was experiencing with the disciples of Moses. The basic question is on where God was to be found. The Jewish opponents claimed that God was with them because of their relation with the Law, temple, and other cultic activities, their relation with Moses, or their ancestry through Abraham. The disciples of Jesus claimed that God was with them, based on the revelation of Jesus. This was substantiated by his words and deeds and was witnessed to by Scripture. Accepting or rejecting this revelation would mean experiencing salvation or not.

This does not imply that John would address the issue of salvation in this fashion in every situation. As becomes clear in 1 John, he does not hesitate to refer to the blood of Jesus that purifies from every sin (1 John 1:7), or to refer to the loving God who sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice (ἱλασμός) for our sins (1 John 4:10). These expressions in 1 John refer to a different situation amongst Christians (an inner-community situation) where the questions about personal sin (wrong deeds and a broken relation between the individual and God) are being addressed. A different situation requires a different approach.

However, if the question were: where could I find God and therefore salvation, the answer would always be: at the door of the sheep pen, following the good shepherd, listening to the Word. For John it is possible to ask further questions, and refine one's answers according to changing questions and situations, but in the end, the essence of salvation is accepting Jesus as the Revelation of God and by accepting (believing in) him, becoming part of the family of God through birth from above.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE SOTERIOLOGY OF ACTS: RESTORATION TO LIFE

Hermie C. van Zyl
University of the Free State

1. Introduction

It goes without saying that the soteriology of Acts cannot be divorced from soteriology in Luke's Gospel. But since the latter is treated separately in this book, this contribution will concentrate on how the theme unfolds in Acts. However, the Gospel material will be brought into play as deemed necessary.

2. Map of Salvation Terminology

When dealing with a theme such as ours, it is of value to first give an overall mapping of the soteriological terms that Luke utilizes in his double work. This will provide an initial indication of the complex nature of Luke's soteriology, at least in so far as the linguistic terms have a bearing on our theme. From there we will provide a more systematized picture of the soteriology of Acts.

The portrayal of the soteriology of the Lukan double work could conveniently be brought together under the umbrella term "salvation". It comprises the word group σωτήρ, σωτηρία, σωτήριον, σῴζω, and the latter's derivative διασῴζω. Among the Gospels and Acts the first three terms appear exclusively in Luke's writings (with the exception of σωτήρ in John 4:42). As far as σῴζω is concerned, it occurs seventeen times in Luke's Gospel. However, it is not as if σῴζω is absent from the other synoptic Gospels. As a matter of fact, statistically speaking there is not much difference between the Synoptics: it appears fifteen times in Matthew and fourteen times in Mark.[1]

[1] The one in Mark 16:16 is not counted.

But it is Luke's distinctiveness that stands out. Apart from the eight cases that Luke takes over from Mark, σῴζω occurs at nine other places that do not have parallels in the other synoptic Gospels (cf. Giles 1983, 10).[2] And what is more, of these nine cases four are used in a spiritual sense.[3] This suggests that Luke appropriates σῴζω as a theological term, and links it to the others in this word group to mark the theme of salvation as central to his theology (cf. Marshall 1979, 92–93). This tendency of Luke is continued in Acts where σῴζω occurs a further thirteen times, of which all but four[4] are used in a spiritual sense.

These data already give us a first impression of the importance of the concept "salvation" in Luke's theology. But apart from these there are other terms (taken from Acts only) that need to be considered to see the full picture of God's redemptive work according to Luke. I first mention the expressions that by and large place the emphasis on *God's* or *Jesus'* actions. These are: forgiveness (ἄφεσις/ἀφίημι),[5] removal (ἐξαλείφω)[6] and cleansing (ἀπολούομαι)[7] of sins; deliverance (ἐξαιρεώ) from situations of distress;[8] purification (καθαρίζω) of the hearts;[9] saved by grace (χάρις);[10] opening (διανοίγω) of the heart;[11] opening (ἀνοίγω) of the door of faith;[12] destined (τάσσω) for eternal life;[13] and obtained (περιποιέομαι) by the blood of the Son.[14] Apart from these expressions, the following issues form the key conditions or requirements for salvation in Luke: the resurrection and ascension of Jesus; the Name of Jesus; the Holy Spirit; the proclamation of the gospel (εὐαγγελίζομαι, Luke's pet phrase); the powerful working of the word; and the miracles/signs as accompanying events in the proclamation.

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[2] 7:50; 8:12, 36, 50; 13:23; 17:19; 19:10; 23:37, 39.
[3] 7:50; 8:12; 13:23; 19:10 (cf. Marshall 1979, 92).
[4] 4:9; 14:9; 27:20, 31.
[5] Where the verb is used extensively in the Gospel in a religious sense, it occurs only once in Acts (8:22) in this sense. Acts prefers to use the noun (2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18).
[6] 3:19.
[7] 22:16.
[8] 7:10, 34; 12:11.
[9] 15:9; cf. 10:15; 11:9.
[10] 15:11; 18:27.
[11] 16:14.
[12] 14:27.
[13] 13:48.
[14] 20:28.

Expressions that focus more on *human response* are: conversion (μετανοεώ—alone or in conjunction with ἐπιστρέφω); to be baptized (βαπτίζω); to believe (πιστεώ) or to be a believer; accepting ([παρα]δέχομαι) the word of God/the witness about Jesus;[15] holding fast (προσμένω) to the grace of God;[16] and to remain (ἐμμένω) in the faith.[17]

The above survey more or less charts the map of salvation terminology in Acts. The prominence of the word group "salvation" demands that it receive the main emphasis. Salvation is the overarching theme of Luke-Acts and supplies the key to the theology of Luke (Marshall 1979, 92). But we have already referred to the complex nature of Luke's soteriology, linguistically indicated by the variety of terms. In order to do justice to the theme, we need to approach it in a comprehensive way. Thus, if salvation is presented as an ellipse, in the rest of the contribution I will deal with the topic by discussing the two focal points of the ellipse: the Saviour of salvation, and the salvation of the Saviour. Luke's soteriology cannot be discussed without taking its Christology into account. These two focal points form flip sides of each other, such that Christology is the prerequisite for understanding soteriology (cf. Talbert 1989, 302–303; Marshall 1979, 94). I will therefore start with Christology.

3. The Saviour of Salvation

This part aims at building a broad foundation on which part four can be built. Several aspects of Luke's Christology need to be argued to form the necessary backdrop against which the whole concept of salvation can be understood. Sections 3.1–3.3 deal with the general conditions of a Lukan Christology that have a bearing on Luke's soteriology, whereas 3.4 deals with the salvific profile of Jesus in Luke-Acts in a more specialized way.

3.1. *The Portrayal of Jesus As Saviour in the Gospel Is Continued in Acts*

If Luke's Gospel depicts Jesus pre-eminently as Saviour, we find that Acts continues this portrayal. The way Luke structures this continuation

[15] 8:14; 11:1; 22:18.
[16] 13:43.
[17] 14:22.

is, inter alia, to present many events in Acts as mirroring events in the Gospel (cf. Goppelt 1978, 614), for example: Jesus continues to heal people, but now through the healing ministry of the apostles (e.g. the healing of the lame man, 3:1–10;[18] Aeneas, the lame who was bedridden for eight years, is restored to health, 9:32–35; Tabitha is raised from the dead, 9:36–43; several summaries of the healing ministry of the apostles are mentioned, 5:15–16; 8:7; 19:11–12); Jesus stilling the storm on the Sea of Galilee is reflected on by the miraculous rescue of Paul and his companions from their storm-wrecked ship in the Mediterranean Sea (27:13–44); the trial and death of Jesus have their mirror images in the events surrounding the death of Stephen (6:10–15; 7:54–60) and the trial of Paul (22:30–23:9; 24:1–27); the *dramatis personae* involved in Paul's trial also reflect Jesus' prosecution: the various Roman authorities (Felix, Festus and eventually the highest power, the emperor himself) with their Jewish/local counterparts (the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees, Sadducees, Herod Agrippa) mirror the same role players in Jesus' trial (the Romans represented by Pilate, and the Jews/local authorities by the Sanhedrin, the Jewish leaders and parties, and Herod Antipas).

There is another strategy utilized by Luke that ties Jesus as Saviour in the Gospel to Acts, and that is the concept of "'the Way" (cf. Green 1995, 102–103; Goppelt 1978, 614). In Acts "the Way" designates the teaching of Christ, or the people who align themselves with this teaching and with God's plan (9:2; 18:25; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22). The concept of "the Way" is well prepared in Luke's Gospel by the Baptist, who has the task of preparing the way of the Lord (Luke 1:76; 3:4–5; 7:27). Drawing on Isa 40:3ff and 59:8, this points at the Messiah's path as the way of peace, redemption, and the gathering and feeding of his flock. The Way motif is worked out in greater detail in the so-called journey narrative in the Gospel, Luke 9:51–19:27. Luke creates this artificial journey (cf. Brown 1997, 244) with the express purpose of focusing the reader's attention on Jesus' destiny facing him in Jerusalem, a destiny that he accepts willingly[19] (cf. Luke 9:51). During this journey Jesus enlightens his

[18] Note that the man is expressively healed "in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" (3:6).

[19] Note the words: ". . . he set his face to go to Jerusalem" (καὶ αὐτὸς τὸ πρόσωπον ἐστήρισεν τοῦ πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ).

disciples—those that find themselves with Jesus on "his Way" to Jerusalem—about many aspects on his destiny and the kingdom of God.[20] The Way motif is found again in Luke 24, where the disciples, who are on the road to Emmaus, are instructed by the risen Jesus on how to understand the Scriptures, how they bear upon his suffering, death and glorification. Thus, it is the teaching ministry of Jesus in particular, as it relates to his identity as Saviour, which is highlighted by the journey motif. No wonder that the teaching of the Lord is expressed by the concept of "the Way" in Acts, and that people adhering to his teaching are called "those who are of the Way" (Acts 9:2).

All of the above emphasises the insight that the structure of the Saviour's work in the Gospel is essentially the same as in Acts. The only difference is that in the Gospel it is the earthly Jesus, whereas in Acts it is the exalted Jesus. But it is the same Jesus who saves. This leads to the next section, in which the emphasis is placed on how it can be the same Jesus.

3.2. *Jesus Present through the Holy Spirit*

The way Jesus is present on earth and performs his saving activities is, according to Acts, through the Holy Spirit. The disciples had to learn the important lesson that Jesus' death did not result in his being absent. Therefore, the sudden appearances and disappearances of Jesus after his resurrection initially fulfil the function of assuring them of his presence.[21] However, they still need to learn the mode of his presence. The ascension that followed must have effected at least three things: it ended any dreams that the apostles might have had of an earthly kingdom (cf. 1:6–7); it brought about the realization

[20] It is noteworthy to mention that Luke inserts large blocks of Q material as well as material from his own source (L) in the journey narrative (cf. Brown 1997, 244), which stresses the unique purpose Luke has in mind with the journey motif, i.e. highlighting Jesus' redemptive destiny.

[21] Richard (1990, 151) stresses that the resurrection of Jesus is often combined with other expressions, such as Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36), as Giver of Life and Saviour (5:30–31), as one who eats and drinks with his disciples (10:39–41), and as one who frequently appears to his disciples (13:31). Therefore, Luke is not so much concerned with a doctrine of resurrection as with the theme of the presence of the risen Lord within the early community.

that it would take some time before the final consummation of the kingdom (they received a missionary task, 1:8); and it made them realize that something special happened to Jesus (his lifting up; a cloud taking him out of their sight; two men in white robes speaking to them, 1:9–11). But it was only after Pentecost that they came to realize that Jesus was exalted to the right hand of the Father (Stanley 1957, 139), and that in future the mode of his presence among them would be through the Spirit. It was the exalted Christ himself who had received the promise of the Spirit from the Father and was now pouring it out as the manifestation of his (Jesus') presence among them (cf. 2:33) (Buckwalter 1998, 115). This is underscored by the remark of Giles (1983, 47), that Luke does not allow for an "absentee Christology". The work of the Spirit is in effect the work of the risen Christ. Therefore, the Spirit is also called "the Spirit of the Lord" (5:9; 8:39) or "the Spirit of Jesus" (16:7). It is confirmed right from the beginning of Acts (1:2), where Luke recounts that Jesus gave instructions "through the Holy Spirit". It also ties in with the observation of De Villiers (1983, 56) that the Spirit is seldom discussed in a non-Christological context in Acts.

This leads to the insight that Jesus and the Spirit are almost interchangeable in Acts. Their respective activities often cannot be separated (Marshall 1979, 181–182). Thus, when the Spirit is depicted as guiding the church (1:2; 8:29; 10:19; 11:12, 28; 13:2, 4; 15:28; 16:6–7; 19:21; 20:22–23; 21:4, 11) it can be confirmed that not only is Jesus also implied in this action, but that he is actually the co-Subject. At least in 1:2 and 16:6–7, Jesus and the Spirit are mentioned in the same breath. Marshall (1979, 181) rightly observes that in 16:6–7 Luke is consciously expressing a viewpoint in that "Holy Spirit" (v. 6) and "Spirit of Jesus" (v. 7) are juxtaposed in the description of how Paul and his companions were prohibited from preaching the Word in certain areas. And in 10:14, 19, Jesus and the Spirit are also paralleled: in 10:14 the voice speaking to Peter is identified as the voice of the Lord (Jesus), and in 10:19 the same voice is that of the Spirit who continues the conversation with Peter. Further, in baptism the gift of the Spirit is given to the believer, whereas baptism is also conducted in the Name of Jesus (2:38; 9:17–18; 19:5–6; cf. 10:43–44; 11:16–17). This clearly indicates that Jesus and the Spirit together effect conversion in the individual. The Spirit was not a once-for-all gift by Jesus on the day of Pentecost,

but Jesus renews this gift for every individual who is baptized in his Name.[22]

3.3. *Divine Initiative behind the Presence of the Risen Jesus*

From the previous section it needs to be stressed that a divine initiative can be observed behind the presence and work of the risen Jesus, not as a separate force alongside Jesus, but to advance the concept that in the risen Jesus God himself is at work. Squires (1998) describes how several themes can be identified throughout the narrative of Acts—especially in the speeches—that consistently represent the divine initiative or plan of God behind the events described. These are: the Spirit; fulfilment of Scripture; divine agents (such as angels and heavenly voices); miracles; and God himself. Of all these, the theme of God stands out, because "most prominent of all in these speeches is the acknowledgement of the direct, unmediated action of God in the events narrated" (Squires 1998, 26). On the day of Pentecost, Peter begins his speech by explaining God's activity *in Jesus* (2:22–24), and concludes by pointing out that it was God who affirmed Jesus as Lord and Messiah (2:36). In subsequent speeches the work of God in Jesus is expanded: "God has glorified his servant Jesus" (3:13), "raised Jesus from the dead" (13:30), and will judge the world by a man appointed by him (17:31). God is also at work in the *early church*. It is at God's behest that the gospel is preached (5:19–20), and it is he who is "adding to their number those who were being saved" (2:47; see also 4:4; 5:14; 6:1, 7). Further, the expansion of the church beyond Palestine is described as "all that God had done with them" (14:27; 15:4).

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[22] Concerning the presence of Jesus, Marshall (1979, 180) draws an interesting parallel between Luke and Paul. According to Marshall the presence and activity of Jesus through the Spirit may be compared to the Pauline "in Christ" formula. Although this formula should not be over interpreted in terms of a mystical relationship between the believer and Christ, it nevertheless depicts the close relationship between the believer and the Lord. For Paul the living Christ was a reality, and life to Paul meant personal communion with Christ, represented by the formula "in Christ". Therefore, Luke's mention of visions and dreams received by Paul and others should not be dismissed too readily. They are Luke's way of presenting the close and personal communication between Christ and the believer, and as such, resembles the Pauline "in Christ" language.

If we focus on the other themes portraying divine activity (such as angels, the Spirit), it is clear that divine planning and providence are also behind specific incidents of *conversion*, such as the Ethiopian eunuch reading from Isa 53 (cf. Acts 8:26–39; especially vv. 26, 29, 39, which speak of the involvement of the angel and the Spirit); Paul, stopped in his tracks by a personal vision of the risen Christ (9:1–9); the train of events leading up to the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10; especially vv. 3–6, 11–16, 19, 44–48); and Lydia whose heart is opened by the Lord (16:14). In 18:10 it is the aspect of divine election that is fore-grounded, in that Paul is encouraged by the Lord to proceed with his work in Corinth. Apart from the fact that Paul is assured that no one will lay a hand on him because the Lord is with him, he is also assured that there are many in Corinth who are God's people, that is, whom God had elected to become part of the one people of God.[23] These incidents of conversion clearly show that ". . . there is a sense in which the individual can do nothing to save himself. The initiative lies entirely with God"[24] (Marshall 1979, 188).

To conclude this section, one may inquire about the function of the stress on divine initiative and planning in the narrative of Acts. One must keep in mind that Luke is not simply recounting past events for the sake of historical interest, but that he is revitalizing these events for an audience living towards the end of the first century in order to encourage them. The believers of his time were involved in their own struggles, particularly to be witnesses in their own right to the gospel of Christ in a dangerous world. Stressing the divine initiative behind the church's origins and how the word of God spread throughout the Mediterranean basin would have been

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[23] That God's election of Gentiles into the one people of God is at the heart of this verse, is made clear by Tannehill (1990, 225). The theme introduced in 15:14 (by James), namely that God is gathering from the Gentiles a people for his name, is picked up again in 18:10. However, God does not have two peoples, Jewish and Gentile. Rather, the phrase λαός ἐστί μοι in 18:10, which closely resembles the common covenantal formula in Jeremiah and Ezekiel (cf. e.g. Jer 7:23; Ezek 11:20), indicates that God is incorporating the Gentiles into his (one) covenant of old.

[24] Contrary to Luke's emphasis on divine initiative in conversion, his mention of pious people and deeds (e.g. Acts 10:2–4, 22, 35) is sometimes noted as a sign of Luke not being free of a "salvation of works". However, this phenomenon in Acts should rather be seen as a kind of *praeparatio evangelica*, and does not jeopardize the "Christ only" gospel (Marshall 1979, 189–190).

a tremendous encouragement to Luke's readers. It would have assured them that the events described in his writings were not the outcome of random and accidental human efforts, but that they carried the markings of God's design. God personally planned and guided the Christian mission. Therefore, ". . . guidance of a similar nature is available to his readers as they explore how to bear witness in their own time and own way" (Squires 1998, 38).

3.4. *The Salvific Profile of Christ*

I now turn to a more specific aspect of the Christology of Acts, namely the salvific profile of Jesus. Three aspects will be treated. The first two are of a more theological nature, viz. the death and exaltation of Christ, whereas the third deals with how the first two would have made sense to first-century people on a grass roots level; hence, Jesus as benefactor.

It is safe to say that salvation in Acts is exclusively linked to Jesus, although the details are not always clear (Jervell 1996, 97). What one can say, though, is that it is not only one facet of Jesus that saves, but all the aspects of his life and work, more specifically his death and exaltation.

3.4.1. *The Death of Jesus*

The relationship between Jesus' death and salvation is always a burning issue in Lukan scholarship.[25] It is clear that Luke is aware of the tradition about Jesus' death effecting salvation (Luke 22:19; Acts 20:28), and of the necessity of his death within the overall salvation plan of God (cf. the high incidence of δεῖ linked to the passion and death of Jesus, e.g. Luke 9:22; 13:33–34; 17:25; 24:7, 26, 46 [δεῖ implied in v. 46]; Acts 17:3; cf. 2:23). However, the exact meaning of Jesus' death with a view to salvation is not explicated. At first sight Luke does not develop the soteriological meaning of Jesus' death into a theological theme. On the contrary, it seems as though Luke tones down the salvific sense of Jesus' death. For example, in Luke 22:27 he omits Mark's λύτρον-logion (Mark 10:45) in favour of the serving motif of Jesus' ministry. No wonder that ever since Hans

[25] For a more detailed survey of the problem, see my overview (Van Zyl 2002).

Conzelmann, in his seminal book of 1954, pointed out the above data and promoted the interpretation that the death of Jesus plays no role in Luke's soteriology, this has almost become the standard view in Lukan scholarship.

Many proposals have been offered on how Luke views the death of Jesus. The most popular are: (a) Although Jesus' death has no salvific meaning, in light of the δεῖ sayings it can be seen as the necessary prelude to his exaltation (Kodell 1979, 225). This should be understood against the backdrop of the prophetic tradition where the pattern of rejection versus vindication has become a fixed motif. In this world righteous people cannot but suffer humiliation and even death at the hands of corrupt people (Pilgrim 1971, 375), but eventually God will vindicate the righteous. In the case of Jesus, God does this by raising Jesus from the dead. Thus the necessity of Jesus' death serves the function of not attracting attention to itself, but pointing to Jesus' exaltation. (b) A more developed and pointed interpretation is to view Jesus' death against the backdrop of Jewish martyrology (a view that originated with Martin Dibelius), particularly as it is portrayed in 2 and 4 Maccabees. Some parallels are drawn between the martyrs and what happened to Jesus (Karris 1990, 71–72 lists these parallels in full),[26] of which the theme of innocence stands out. It is well known that Luke accentuates the innocence of Jesus in the passion narrative (e.g. Luke 23:4, 14–15, 22, 41, 47), and in Acts 2:23–24; 2:36; 3:13–15; 5:30–31; 7:52; 13:28 (cf. O'Toole 2000, 332). The effect of Jesus' death being viewed as a martyr would be—for one—that the guilt of the Jews is thus brought to light, that they may repent, as is shown in Luke 23:48 (the spectators beating their breasts), Acts 2:36–37, and 3:19.

However impressive the arguments of the so-called standard view are, in the last decade or so voices have been raised, calling us to revisit Conzelmann's thesis. New appreciation is being shown in the soteriological meaning of Jesus' death in Luke-Acts. Some of the arguments are: (a) The omission of the λύτρον-logion (Mark 10:45) in Luke 22:27 should not be overly stressed. There are indications that Luke is not following his Mark Vorlage in this instance, but a special, pre-Markan source, which does not contain this logion

[26] It should be noted, however, that Karris himself does not subscribe to the view of martyrology as forming the background to Jesus' death in Luke.

(cf. Green 1988, 46; Baarlink 2002, 26–28). Thus the absence of Mark 10:45 has nothing to do with Luke downplaying the soteriological meaning of Jesus' death. (b) Luke's use of Isa 52–53 is being looked at in a new light. Formerly much was made of the fact that Luke, in his citing of the servant passage, does not quote those parts that deal with the substitutional suffering of the servant. But Luke's utilization of Isa 52–53 could be viewed in a different manner. First of all, Luke is the only Gospel that quotes Isa 52–53 verbatim in connection with the personal fate or passion of Jesus (Luke 22:37; Acts 8:32–33; 3:13–14 [allusion]) (Williams 1975, 224). At the very least this shows his interest in this tradition in its application to Jesus' passion. And secondly, the mere fact that Luke quotes from Isa 52–53 is an indication that in his mind, the whole of the servant tradition is applicable to Jesus' death. This is in line with how intertextuality worked in ancient times. Not only the actual part cited, but by implication the whole passage from which the quote is taken, is employed, in this case also the parts where the vicarious death of the servant occurs (cf. Larkin 1977, 332–333). It can therefore be asserted that the servant passage from Isa 52–53 colours the passion and death of Jesus with soteriological overtones. (c) The phrase unique to Luke in his Last Supper passage, τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν (Luke 22:19), has recently received special attention. In an extensive linguistic study, Carpinelli (1999) has demonstrated that the expression εἰς ἀνάμνησις (together with εἰς μνημόσυνον) in the LXX and other Jewish writings is constantly found in cultic contexts where it functions as an expiatory memorial before God. Thus, it could be interpreted that in Luke 22:19 the death of Jesus is erected before God as a permanent memorial to remind believers of the expiatory meaning of Jesus' death. This interpretation is strengthened when it is combined with the observation that in Luke 22:19, Luke is unique among the Gospels in having ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν instead of the ὑπὲρ/περὶ πολλῶν of Mark and Matthew.[27] This, together with

[27] Jeremias (1967, 165) argues that the shift from πολλῶν (the—older—tradition found in Mark) to the more personal ὑμῶν probably took place for liturgical reasons—"daß jeder der Feiernden sich von Herrn ganz persönlich angeredet weiß." Thus, Luke probably did not make the change himself but took the more personalized phrase over from the tradition (cf. too the occurrence in 1 Cor 11:24). But this does not diminish the strength of the argument that Luke emphasizes the salvific significance of the death of Jesus more strongly than Mark. The fact of the matter

the fact that Luke repeats the phrase in the bread-word as well as the cup-word (Mark and Matthew have it in the cup-word only), shows that Luke is stressing the salvific significance of the death of Jesus even more strongly than Mark (Fuller 1979, 215).

In light of the above survey, at the very least, one must say that the still widely held conviction that the death of Jesus in the Lukan writings should be relegated to an inferior status as far as his soteriology is concerned, is in need of a serious reconsideration. To my mind, enough evidence has been accumulated to assert that Jesus' death in Lukan thought is not a mere prelude (or afterthought) to Jesus' exaltation, but is ingrained in Luke's soteriology.

But what exactly does the death of Jesus contribute to salvation in Luke? At the very least one must say that it keeps Jesus' exaltation (see next section) 'in balance'—no exaltation without crucifixion. It is the death, and the death of this man only, the δίκαιος in terms of Isa 52–53, that leads to exaltation. This explains why so much emphasis is placed by Luke on the necessity[28] of Jesus' death, because without the death of the δίκαιος the integrity of salvation is compromised. Death and exaltation form an inextricable unity. Without death there can be no exaltation and no forgiveness of sins. It is this insight that elevates Jesus' death to the category of expiatory death, especially against the backdrop of Isa 52–53, as explained above.

3.4.2. *The Exaltation of Jesus*

If one is still unconvinced of the place and status of Jesus' death in Luke's soteriology, there can be no doubt about Jesus' exaltation. The latter includes Jesus' resurrection, ascension and sessio at the right hand of God, and, as a result of this, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Luke's emphasis on the exaltation of Jesus is well illustrated by the contrasts in Acts between what the Jews[29] did to Jesus

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is that Luke chose not to follow Mark's πολλῶν, but to link up with the more personalized version of the tradition. And this should be given full credit in the interpretation of this phrase.

[28] Only once in Acts (17:3), but the theme is an iteration of the same thought which is abundantly present in the Gospel of Luke (9:22; 13:33; 17:25; 22:37; 24:7, 26, 44; cf. 24:25, 27, 46).

[29] By "Jews" one should in fact be mentioning the Jewish *leaders* by name. The latter, especially the chief priests, are the main culprits in killing Jesus—at least

and what God eventually did. In Acts 2:36 and 3:13–15, Peter castigates the Jews on two occasions for having rejected Jesus , since it is precisely this Jesus, the "Author of life" (ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ζωῆς, 3:15), whom they had rejected and crucified, that God vindicated by raising him from the dead and by making him Lord and Christ (καὶ κύριος . . . καὶ χριστός, 2:36). In Acts 5:30–31 we find a similar contrast, but this time Jesus is called "Leader and Saviour" (ἀρχηγὸς καὶ σωτήρ).

Important in 5:30–31 is the title "saviour", and that the notion of repentance and forgiveness of sins, and thus salvation, is attached to the exalted Christ. As the exalted one he is on a par with Yahweh of the Old Testament. Precisely what distinguishes Yahweh from everything else is that he guides his saving plan according to his will. And this is exactly what Jesus does in Acts: he guides the church in its mission to fulfil his (= Jesus') saving plan for the world (Buckwalter 1998, 123). This saving plan is bound up in a special way with the Name of Jesus. In the Old Testament, salvation is associated with the Name of Yahweh, the Lord (κύριος). In particular, it is forgiveness of sins that is his prerogative (cf. Jer 31:34) (Marshall 1979, 169). Therefore, everybody who calls on the Name of Yahweh under the old covenant will be saved (Joel 2:32). This concept is now transferred to Jesus as the κύριος in Acts 2:21 (cf. 10:43; Luke 24:47). Just as one could call on the Name of Yahweh to be saved, one can do so now by calling on the Name of Jesus (Buckwalter 1998, 108, 119; Turner 1998, 332).

We have seen that it is through the fact that Jesus was raised and seated at the right hand of God that he assumed the status and right

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according to Luke's *Gospel*. Tyson (1986) has convincingly argued that whereas the Pharisees play an ambivalent role towards Jesus and are excluded from the events leading up to his death, the chief priests are isolated as the main culprits (cf. 1986, 78). The Pharisees' opposition to Jesus is associated with issues pertaining to the law, whereas that of the chief priests is related to issues concerning the centrality of Jerusalem and the temple. When we turn to Acts the picture changes. Chance (1991, 71) has pointed out that in the speeches of Acts the Jewish *people* of Jerusalem, and not only the leaders, are equally held responsible for Jesus' death. Chance explains this discrepancy between the Gospel and Acts as that passive non-resistance in the face of evil (the Jewish crowds) is just as reprehensible as active participation in the evil of killing the Christ of God (the Jewish leaders). But to be held responsible is not the same as being rejected by God. Carlson (1991) concurs with Chance that, according to Luke, the Jewish people are just as guilty of the death of Jesus as the Jewish leaders, but that Luke constantly leaves open the possibility for repentance by the people (Luke 23:48; Acts 2:37).

to forgive sins. To this, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit should be added. For Luke, salvation is not only realized through the forgiveness of sins, but also in the receiving of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:38; 9:17; 10:43–44; 11:15–17). As the exalted Christ, Jesus has received the Spirit and now has the authority to administer the giving of the Holy Spirit (Green 1990, 10).

In sum, according to Acts the exaltation of Jesus comprises the following: the crucified Jesus is vindicated by God; he now sits at the right hand of God as Lord and Christ. He has the authority to put into operation God's salvation plan for the world. The way in which the latter is accomplished, is that Jesus has the right to forgive sins and to administer the giving of the Holy Spirit.

3.4.3. *Jesus as Benefactor*

It is at this point that we need to ask what the above "theological" data concerning Jesus as Saviour would have meant to ordinary people of the first century. Here, the results of numerous socio-historical studies have opened our eyes for new perspectives. We now turn to these.

The term "salvation" can be interpreted in terms of the concept of "benefactor/benefaction". As a matter of fact, in the ancient Greco-Roman world "salvation" functioned as the semantic cousin of benefaction (Green 1998, 87). Green (1998, 87) aptly sums up what salvation through the glasses of benefaction would have meant:

> As such, salvation had to do with the exercise of beneficent power for the provision of a variety of blessings, a general manifestation of generous concern for the well-being of others, with the denotation of rescue from perilous circumstances. This might include the health of the state, including its internal safety and the security of its borders; being rescued from a disaster at sea; the healing of physical malady; and more.

Applied to Jesus, it means that as the risen Saviour and planner, Jesus can perform the function of benefactor. Two aspects should be considered. First, in Old Testament terms it carries connotations of protection by Yahweh. God is seen as the Great Protector, particularly against enemies. As such, Yahweh is the one delivering Israel from slavery, and leading them to victory in battle, in this way ensuring that they can live in peace and security as a nation among the surrounding nations (Green 1998, 8–9). Secondly, in terms of the Hellenistic world, benefaction means to share in the good things that

a kingly figure bestows on his people, such as protection, stability, security, gifts and favours. Not for nothing then is Jesus juxtaposed with Emperor Augustus in Luke 2:1. Just as the latter was known as saviour and benefactor, it is implied that Jesus as Saviour and benefactor is in a position to bestow God's blessings on his people. This also ties in with the cultural phenomenon of patron-broker-client relationships in antiquity. God is the patron and Jesus the broker: as patron, God is the one who has all blessings in store, and as broker Jesus gives people (the clients) access to those blessings (Moxness 1991, 257–260).

But Jesus is a broker of a different kind. He moves in from the margins of society to lay claim to the centre of power, thereby re-interpreting the whole of Jewish religious life. The travel narrative in Luke's Gospel symbolically typifies this movement: Jesus leaves Galilee and deliberately sets his aim on Jerusalem, the centre of power (Moxness 1991, 257). Speaking of power, however, it is particularly the servant aspect of Jesus as broker that is emphasized by Luke. Jesus turns everything upside down. In the Gospel the meals show how Jesus overturns the social system by having table fellowship with various (unacceptable) groups. In Acts this is carried further by Luke breaking down the purity codes of Jewish society (e.g. Peter being ordered to eat unclean animals, Acts 10) (Neyrey 1991c, 381). Jesus' serving leadership makes him a new type of broker (Buckwalter 1998, 123; Moxness 1991, 258–260). He inaugurates a new concept of God, one who is impartial and inclusive. He upsets the traditional concepts and roles of society, but nevertheless is not set to destroy society, as such, but to restructure it (Neyrey 1991b, 298).

Having laid the Christological foundation of salvation in Luke-Acts, we now turn to the salvation wrought by Jesus.

4. The Salvation of the Saviour

4.1. *Realized Salvation*

Luke is well aware of the future of salvation. In Zechariah's vision (Luke 1:71), the future deliverance from enemies is implied. And Acts 2 contains important hints that this vision has not completely disappeared. When the prophecy of Joel is appropriated by Peter in

his speech, "salvation" still retains its apocalyptic overtones, especially in 2:19–21 where mention is made of the signs in heaven, the coming of the Lord's day, and that everyone will be saved who calls on the name of the Lord (Green 1998, 93; Marshall 1979, 178). Acts 17:31 also speaks of God's appointed day on which he will judge the world (judgment being the flip-side of salvation). And in Acts 1:11 it is promised that Jesus will come in the same manner in which he ascended to heaven (cf. Marshall 1979, 176).

However, in Acts the emphasis falls on salvation as a present reality (Marshall 1979, 178).[30] The truth of this has already been observed in section 3.2, where we dealt with the presence of Jesus in Acts—he is present through the Holy Spirit. The Messianic age—and thus, salvation—has come, not by the return of Christ, but by the coming of the Spirit (Stanley 1957, 139). Men and women can now experience the age to come in this age. The gift of the Spirit means that something of the reality of the kingdom of God can be experienced now, because in every situation Christ is with his people (Giles 1983, 49). The signs and wonders performed by the risen Jesus (cf. Acts 4:30) are important proof of the presence of salvation. The fact that the apostles continue the healing ministry of the earthly Jesus, underscores the importance of this aspect of the church's ministry as actualizing the immediate availability of salvation. Flanagan says (1979, 212): "Jesus, who saved-healed in the past, saves-heals at this moment." Of course, salvation is much more than the restoration of health, as we will see below.

4.2. *Salvation As a "Package Deal"?*

The salvation offered in the proclamation of the gospel demands a response. Eschatological times ask for a radical change. The history of Israel has acquired a new interpretation through the coming of Jesus Christ. Thus, when Paul asks King Agrippa whether he believes the prophets (26:27), it is not simply an inquiry into Agrippa's commitment to the prophets, but whether he accepts Paul's interpreta-

[30] Even in Luke's Gospel the presence of salvation is accentuated, especially in the form of healings. Jesus' penchant for healing people on the Sabbath (e.g. Luke 4:31–39; 6:6–11; 13:10–17; 14:1–6) shows that the present is important; salvation cannot wait until later (Pilch 1991, 188).

tion of the prophets as being fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The coming of Jesus as Saviour means that a new offer of repentance and forgiveness of sins is being made to Israel. Therefore the question: "What should we do (to be saved)?" (Acts 2:37; 16:30) is of vital importance to Luke (Green 1998, 102–105).[31] It comprises the only correct response to the preaching of the gospel.

Several answers are given in Acts to the above question. In general, Marshall (1979, 192–195) identifies the following typical response elements or constants: the preaching of the Word (2:14–36; 4:2; 8:4; etc.) must be accompanied by the *hearing* of the Word (2:37; 4:4; 8:6; etc.); by faith (8:12; 14:23); and by repentance (2:38; 3:19; 5:31; etc.). If we take two prominent passages, Acts 2:37–38 and 16:31–33, as our cue, the answer is: repentance, baptism, forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37–38); and faith, salvation, baptism (16:31–33) respectively. These two passages almost suggest something of a "package deal" of salvation. But if we take a closer look, it is clear that throughout Acts the pattern differs and not all the elements appear all the time. Nowhere is a fixed pattern prescribed or implied. Rather, Acts contains a host of possibilities: believing, to be baptized, turning to God, listening, seeing, and repenting. If one wished to discern an "order of salvation" in all this, it could be: God initiates, people hear the message of salvation, and people respond. But perhaps it suffices to say that in Acts people are asked to identify with "the Way" (Green 1990, 104–105).

However, it is necessary for us to pay special attention to the element of "forgiveness of sins". Most scholars agree that this forms an important element of salvation in Luke.[32] The theme is encountered in the Gospel in the concept "release" (ἄφεσις) (Luke 4:18–19). "Release" is then developed along three lines: forgiveness of sins (Luke 11:4), to be free from diabolic power (13:16), and to be free from debts (11:4). In Acts the theme is expanded.[33] In Peter's paradigmatic

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[31] In Acts 2:37, Peter's speech is interrupted by the crowd to ask this important question. This phenomenon of the interruption of speeches is a trait that occurs often in Acts, sometimes in anger or politely negatively (e.g. 4:1–2; 7:54; 13:44–45; 17:32–33; 22:22; 26:24), and at another time more positively (10:44) (Green 1998, 102).

[32] Of the eleven occurrences of the abstract form ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν in the New Testament, Luke-Acts alone has eight (Jervell 1996, 99; Stenschke 1998, 132).

[33] Where the verbal form, ἀφίημι, is usually employed in the Gospel, in Acts the abstract form, ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν is found (cf. Jervell 1996, 99). See also Section 2, "Map of salvation terminology".

speech on the day of Pentecost, the people are specifically promised forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38), a promise that is repeated and enacted throughout Acts in crucial passages such as 3:19; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 15:9; 22:16; 26:18. It also appears alongside "salvation" (Acts 13:26//38; 4:12//10:43; 10:43//11:14; 5:31). It is not without reason that forgiveness of sins receives so much attention, because if sin were the means by which people were excluded from the community of God's people, forgiveness of sin marks their restoration to the community (Green 1998, 94–95; Jervell 1996, 100).

In the next section (see 4.3), I will return to the element of forgiveness of sins, but suffice it to say that forgiveness is mainly encountered in the speeches of Acts where the guilt of the Jews is a topic. It is the Jews in particular to whom forgiveness is offered, because of their share in the death of God's Messiah (cf. Acts 5:31). This is their one great sin—that they rejected their Messiah. Therefore, if they forfeit this last chance of repentance, and delay their answer until that time "when the mission has come to the end of the earth, that is the Dispersion, there will be no more salvation for Israel" (Jervell 1996, 99).

Despite the emphasis on the Jews, forgiveness of sins is also extended to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 10:43f, Cornelius and his house). If one included the concept of repentance, then Acts 11:18 and 17:30 could also be cited as witnesses that all people form the object of God's offer of forgiveness of sins (Marshall 1979, 193). This is no wonder, because for Luke sin is the one condition that deprives all of humankind of a proper relationship with God, a perspective that we will elaborate upon in the following section.

4.3. *Relationship between Physical and Spiritual Salvation*

It is important to determine the relationship between physical and spiritual salvation in Acts, because of the way Luke uses the salvation word group in his double work.

Scholars widely acknowledge the fact that σῴζω is often used in contexts where it simply means physical healing (e.g. Luke 8:48; Acts 4:9). This would have been on a par with the use in Greco-Roman literature where σῴζω is almost exclusively used in this sense. But there are instances, especially in Acts, where σῴζω is employed in a purely religious context (e.g. Acts 2:21). Indeed, this can be seen

as the special contribution of Luke—that he employs a secular concept in a religious context.

The question is: how should we view the relationship between these two uses of σῴζω, and what does it mean for the soteriology of Acts? Witherington (1998, 154) is of the opinion that there is a steady progression between the Gospel and Acts: more concrete use in the Gospel (healings) toward a more religious use in Acts. No doubt the occurrences can warrant such a view.[34] But to my mind, the emphasis should not be placed on the progression or the difference between the Gospel and Acts, because that may signal a deliberate effort on the part of Luke to portray it in this way. (This, at least, is the impression created by Witherington's treatment of the matter).[35] Of course, it may have been deliberate, but I rather think that it ties in naturally with the material described by Luke in the Gospel and in Acts respectively. In the Gospel the healing ministry of Jesus is fore-grounded, resulting in the "secular" use of σῴζω, whereas in Acts the proclamation of the gospel is highlighted, resulting in a higher incidence of the religious use of σῴζω.

More important, the question is: what do these uses portray about Luke's soteriology? First of all salvation is concrete. It is bound up with the way in which Jesus meets the concrete needs of people. He does not shy away from these. But salvation according to Luke is more than this; it is not restricted to the alleviation of physical needs. The latter becomes the "symbol" for total redemption. Yes, salvation does include physical healing, but it also comprises forgiveness of sins, reception of the word, and faith in Christ (Flanagan 1979, 207). This is well illustrated in the events surrounding the jailer of Philippi (Acts 16:25–34). His initial cry: "What must I do to be saved?" (16:30), is first and foremost a cry to be delivered or rescued from the present calamity of the earthquake, and—the notion concomitant

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[34] To mention only the term σῴζω. I refer the reader to the introduction where the statistics of this verb are discussed. Of the seventeen occurrences in the Gospel, only four are used in a spiritual sense, whereas in Acts it is used thirteen times, of which all but four are employed in a spiritual sense. This clearly shows a shift towards a more spiritual use of σῴζω in Acts.

[35] Witherington (1998, 154) ties the more abundant occurrence of the mundane, physical sense of σῴζω in the Gospel to the fact that salvation in the fuller sense of the word only comes after Pentecost. Luke therefore "reserves" the spiritual sense of σῴζω until Acts, so to speak.

to it—from the manifestation of the supernatural in this "natural" disaster (so Witherington 1998, 153–154). To be more specific, in all probability the jailer's cry is one for help to escape the wrath of the gods. The supernatural events that led to the jail doors flying open were enough proof to him that he was party to the incarceration of innocent people, which is punishable by the gods. Thus, the jailer asks for physical protection (Stenschke 1998, 129–130). But the salvation offered by Paul and Silas is much more than that. It involves the total redemption of the jailer and his house by faith in the Lord Jesus (16:34).[36]

The incident regarding the jailer epitomizes what is at stake in salvation according to Luke. It brings to the surface what the deepest state is from which is being saved. Salvation is not mere physical healing, it is not even deliverance from a looming supernatural catastrophe or calamity, but it is ultimately salvation from sin. Thus, the question of the jailer echoes similar events in the Gospel and Acts. At the beginning of the Gospel it is Peter who is confronted with a supernatural situation (the miraculous catch of fish), which brings out his deepest want and distress—that he is a sinful man (Luke 5:8). He experiences a wide rift between him and Jesus. As with the jailer, he becomes aware of his state or condition from which salvation is necessary. Back to the jailer, his question indicates deeds that need to be done to rectify his situation. But the right actions are not what is needed most. The right attitude or mental insight and commitment is what is needed. Therefore one can almost paraphrase the jailer's question as follows: "Why do I need to be saved?" . . . "What is wrong with me, what have I done that I need to be saved?" (Stenschke 1998, 131). A similar question is asked by the Jewish audience on the day of Pentecost after having heard Peter's exposition of the events surrounding Jesus (Acts 2:37): "Brothers, what should we do?" Peter's response (repentance, baptism, forgiveness of sins, reception of the Holy Spirit) again stresses the human condition from which deliverance is mandatory. The

[36] Witherington (1998, 154 fn. 41) offers a solution of how we can retain the original sense of the jailer's cry for help (to be rescued from calamity), and still give full credit to the fuller salvation that Paul and Silas offer. It lies in the theology of Luke the writer. Luke telescopes the narrative in v. 32 to include the later outcome of witnessing to the entire family. In this way the jailer's cry for help becomes, in the narrative of Acts, a request for Christian salvation.

further charge of Peter—that they should save themselves from this corrupt generation (2:40)—also demonstrates the state of corruption that forms the grave human condition from which salvation is necessary.

Thus it becomes clear that in the mind of Luke salvation has to do with the universal dilemma of people: their sin. This holds true for both Jews and Gentiles. Basically it means to be alienated from God. This condition is manifested among the Jews in their rejection of Jesus. And the Gentiles are viewed by Paul as being in a terrible state of darkness and in the power of Satan (Acts 26:17–18). In this sense, Luke's anthropology, and therefore soteriology, does not differ that much from the rest of the New Testament: people need to be saved because of their alienation from God (Stenschke 1998, 144).

To return to the initial question of this section—the relationship between physical and spiritual salvation in Acts—one can say that the soteriology of Acts is comprehensive. It includes both the physical and the spiritual (Marshall 1979, 94–95). In the Gospel, due to the nature of Jesus' ministry, the physical is fore-grounded. But soon it becomes clear that what Luke has in mind is the total redemption of people because of human depravity. The boundaries between the physical and the spiritual are crossed (Green 1998, 90). It was the death and ascension of Jesus that finally shattered the understanding of the kingdom of God in terms of exclusive earthly blessings (cf. Acts 1:6–8) (Stanley 1957, 139). In this respect, the remarks of Pilch are noteworthy. He epitomises the ministry of Jesus as that of a prophet-healer (1991, 194). First he investigates which body parts are affected by disease and consequently healed by Jesus, and what that would have meant in ancient society. It turns out to be the heart/eyes, mouth and hand, which represent emotions, speech and action respectively. The body parts affected indicate that the total human being is dysfunctional (1991, 204–207). By *healing* these body parts Jesus re-integrates people in their cultural and social world. But by *preaching* (prophetic aspect) repentance and change of heart, human beings are also saved in terms of their relationship with God (1991, 194).[37] In this sense one can say that physical healing in Luke-Acts is symbolic of spiritual healing (Giles 1983, 11). Or, if

[37] Pilch (1991, 206) observes that in Acts the mouth-ears zone is trouble free, because redemption is at hand in the preaching of the gospel (mouth-ears). The

asked what salvation in essence amounts to in Luke-Acts, one could say that Lukan salvation is *healing*, but then healing in a comprehensive sense. Flanagan (1979, 211) sums it up:

> It (salvation—HCvZ) *can* include physical healing, but it *must* (italics Flanagan's) include the deeper, more pervasive healing which is forgiveness of sins (Luke 1:77; Acts 5:31). Jesus' physical healings are sign, symbol, sacrament, manifestation, and proof of the spiritual healing with which they are allied. Luke's vocabulary happily embraces both.

4.4. *Communal Aspect of Salvation*

In Acts, incorporation with the people of God, the church, is a *sine qua non* for salvation. Therefore Luke mentions explicitly that the Lord added to the church those that were saved (Acts 2:47; cf. 2:41) (Jervell 1996, 97). In contrast to modern Western culture where individual resolve is highly valued, this communal aspect would not have been unusual in ancient society where one's total well-being was bound up with belonging to a group. What would have been extraordinary, though, are the kinds of people belonging to this community. In Acts 2 the principle of multi-ethnicity is introduced in a subtle way: Jews from "every nation under heaven" are present in Jerusalem (2:5); the countries of origin are mentioned by name (2:9–11); the Joel-citation emphasizes that the Spirit is poured out on "all flesh" (2:17); and the promise of salvation goes out to "all who are far away" (2:39; cf. Isa 57:19) (Green 1998, 92). In short, the Gentiles are part of this new community. And this—the gospel to the nations—is precisely the golden thread running through Acts, already envisioned in Acts 1:8 (the apostles being Jesus' witnesses to the ends of the earth), and, as indicated above, proleptically fulfilled in Acts 2 with the Jews *from all nations* being gathered in Jerusalem at Pentecost (cf. Haenchen 1971, 170). Furthermore, Dupont (1962, 14–15) draws our attention to the way Luke's double work begins and ends, indicating how the mission to the nations is ingrained in the fabric of Luke's thought: the beginning of Luke's Gospel and

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main problem areas, though, are the heart-eyes and hands-feet zones—heart-eyes: Philip and Paul explain the scriptures to people who don't understand (Acts 8:30–35; 13:16–41); hands-feet: the lame man is healed to walk again (Acts 3:2–10), and the concept of "the Way" is introduced in Acts (one should walk like a Christian, be a follower of the Way).

the end of Acts clearly show that "the ends of the earth" is part and parcel of Luke's view. Compared to Matthew and Mark, Luke 3:6 adds the words from Isa 40:5: "and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." And in Acts 28:28, Luke ends his double work with the words: "Let it be known . . . that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen." It is hard to ignore the parallel between these words and those of Luke 3:6.

Apart from the Gentiles, another category of people is included in this new community: the lame (3:1–4:12; 8:7; 14:8–10), the ill and demon-possessed (5:12–16; 8:7), the physically mutilated (8:26–40), and even those raised from death to life (9:36–43; 20:7–12). Because of their ailments and conditions these people had always been socially deprived in some way, even made to feel unwelcome and cast out. But, following Jesus' ministry of healing and inclusion of this category of people as described in the Gospel, Acts similarly recounts their restoration to the believing community. A case in point is the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26–40. As an eunuch he would have been excluded from the temple worship in Jerusalem. Although the eschatological vision of Isaiah existed that eunuchs and foreigners and other outcasts would be re-incorporated in the end days (Isa 56:4–6), for the present this eunuch would still have experienced a cold shoulder in the temple worship in Jerusalem, according to the prescript of Deut 23:1. But what is denied under Mosaic Law is offered freely by Philip, the representative of "the Way". Through the act of Christian baptism this eunuch is ritually transformed and accepted as a full member of God's new community (cf. Parsons 1998, 113). As was seen in the previous section, physical healing or acceptance of the physically mutilated becomes the concrete symbol of the religious re-integration of all people into God's community in Acts (cf. Green 1998, 92).

The relationship of this community to Israel is equally important. Luke portrays the church as being grafted onto Israel. The church emerges out of faithful Israel; it is the new people of God (Seccombe 1998, 352–353). Above we have mentioned the subtle way in which Luke introduces the inclusion of the Gentiles into the people of God by mentioning *all the nations of the world* being represented by the faithful Jews gathered in Jerusalem at Pentecost. Now we must view the same data from another angle, that of the *remnant* of Israel being present here. Not for nothing are they called "devout" (εὐλαβεῖς) Jews (2:5). Peter addresses them throughout his speech as "Jewish men"

(2:14), "Israelites'" (2:22) and "the whole house of Israel". But he also reminds them by citing Joel 2:32 ("everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved," Acts 2:21) that it is only the remnant that will enjoy salvation. The notion of the remnant is strengthened when Peter urges his audience to save themselves from "this corrupt generation" (2:40), that is, to separate themselves from sinful Israel who has rejected their Messiah (Johnson 1993, 528). And to add force to the concept of the remnant, Acts 2:47 tells us how the Lord added—from Israel!—day by day, those that were saved to the number of those already saved. Acts 15:16–18 underscores it by referring to Amos 9:11, namely that God will restore the fallen house of David (Jervell 1996, 97).

To stress this point: In the Gospel and Acts, Luke uses saving language to indicate that the people of God are being restored as a response to the prophetic visitation by the Lord. His people are being renewed. Acts, in particular, emphasizes that Israel as such is not a religiously viable community any more. For Luke, in contrast to Paul, Israel is not the nation of covenantal promises any more (Rom 9:4); it is just a nation among nations that happened to be the first recipient of God's revelation, but now is in desperate need of restoration. Thus the stress on the concept of the remnant above, and that the church is the continuation of faithful Israel (Goppelt 1978, 619–620). Indeed, to be saved involves the realization that Israel is bankrupt, that there is no salvation in this community any more. One has to be renewed, and the only way is to be grafted onto the faithful remnant of Israel; one has to be added to the number of those already saved (2:47). A new community is formed, consisting of both the remnant of the Jews and the new believers from Gentile stock. This makes up the social aspect of being saved: to belong to this new community (cf. Johnson 1993, 528–529).

Furthermore, the communal aspect of salvation confirms what has been said in the previous section about Luke merging the physical and spiritual aspects of salvation. According to Acts the early house churches in Jerusalem shared their earthly possessions in a remarkable way, such that nobody lacked anything (2:44–46; 4:34–35, 37). That is why sinners in Luke-Acts are not so much people who transgress the law, but who wrongfully appropriate and apply their possessions (Goppelt 1978, 616). Elliot (1991) has made important observations from a socio-historical perspective about the sharing feature of the early church. He investigated the relationship between

house and temple in Luke-Acts and arrived at the following results: Temple and house are not mere physical locations, but—viewed against the backdrop of how urban, official institutions were regarded vis-à-vis the informal, family dwellings of the countryside—function as socio-ideological entities. The temple represents the elitist, exclusionist, and centralist point of view, where money and earthly means are hoarded and kept away from the masses that need them. Conversely the house represents the family, the inclusive, open and caring, reciprocal community. Where the *temple* is the focus in the Gospel, it is the *house* in Acts. No wonder that in the Gospel, the story begins (1:5–23) and ends (24:50–53) in the temple. In Acts, however, it begins (1:12–14) and ends (28:30–31) in the house; gradually the house replaces the temple as place of God's redemptive presence. The house becomes a symbol of the social life of the kingdom of God; it is all about humbleness, and serving and helping others.[38] Resources are not directed to some distant centre and redistributed according to the interests of those in power, but are directly available to those in need (Acts 2:2:44–47; 4:32–37; 6:1–6). Within the church it is not about power anymore, but about equal social relations (Moxness 1991, 264). In the house churches people could experience the full effect of what it meant to be saved.

5. Conclusion

How would the ancient readers have conceived the kind of saviour and salvation that Luke describes in Acts? They would have understood Jesus to be the exalted Lord, the Messiah of God, who came forth from the eternal salvation plan of God. In this plan Jesus' death was a necessity, because without the death of this δίκαιος there

[38] Luke-Acts' well-known preoccupation with the temple may be seen in a new light against the backdrop of Elliott's observations. One might say that the Jesus movement wants to lay hold of and re-interpret the temple from the perspective that Jesus, and not the Jewish cult, is the true content of the temple. Thus it is in the temple that Simeon and Anna encounter the babe Jesus (Luke 2:22–39), and where Jesus is found as a twelve year old—in the house of his Father (Luke 2:49). And in Acts we find that the early believers spent much time together in the temple (2:46). By means of these portrayals Luke creates the image that the church is the continuation of believing Israel (Goppelt 1978, 601–602). But simultaneously with the "occupation" of the temple, there is also a shift away from the temple to the house in Acts.

could be no exaltation and forgiveness of sins, and therefore no salvation. As the risen one, Jesus is present and working in their midst through the Holy Spirit. As the one positioned at the right hand of God, he was the heavenly benefactor and broker. He was in the position to administer the blessings of God to all of humankind. But differently from the benefactors of the ancient commonwealth, Jesus is not presented as a Lord who wields power, but he serves. He incorporates all kinds of people into his fellowship, people who normally would not have mingled. This is so, because Jesus reveals the heart of God as impartial to all and as embracing all into his fold.

This kind of Saviour offers a special kind of salvation. It is not "a pie in the sky when you die"—salvation, but it is concrete and immediately available. It even offers physical restoration that re-integrates people into society as complete human beings. But it offers much more; it presents full restoration of the relationship with God through repentance, faith in the Name of Jesus, and forgiveness of sins, sin being the one condition that alienates humans from God. Thus forgiven, one is incorporated into God's community, which is none other than the continuation of faithful Israel, the remnant which, together with the believers from Gentile stock, forms the new community of God. This community is totally different from what was prevalent in Israel of old. Here the presence of God is not experienced through cultic rites, dominated from the temple by the power-play of the so-called religious elite, but in the blood-warm family relations of the ordinary home. Here there is no power-play; everything is shared, and people serve one another with love, acceptance and forgiveness.

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PART TWO

PAULINE AND DEUTERO-PAULINE LETTERS ON SALVATION

CHAPTER ONE

THE "FOR US" PHRASES IN PAULINE SOTERIOLOGY: CONSIDERING THEIR BACKGROUND AND USE

Cilliers Breytenbach
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
University of Stellenbosch

1. Introduction

This introductory paper seeks to prepare the field for the subsequent studies on metaphors in Pauline soteriology. Following the verb σῴζω ("to save"—cf. Spicq 1994, *s.v.*), soteriology essentially means deliverance from a perilous situation which would, if it were not for the salvation, end in death. In Paul's thought, God saves humans who are in a situation of mortal danger because of their sins. His salvation is inextricably connected to the rescuing effect of the death of Christ. In many cases Paul expresses the effect of Christ's death by means of traditional formulaic phrases connected with one of the prepositions ὑπέρ, περί or διά to a verb referring to Christ's death, e.g. ἀποθνήσκω or (παρα-)δίδωμι ὑπέρ/περί τινος. The scope of this papers does not allow the rehearsal of the philological discussion of these phrases (cf. Bieringer 1992), but it might initially be of some benefit to ask specific and preliminary questions, which go beyond mere grammatical matters (2). Before venturing on the use Paul himself made of such traditional phrases, an overview of these phrases in his letters is needed (3). In most cases, the specific verbs that combine with these prepositional phrases, such as "dying", or "being delivered" are of paramount importance for the interpretation of the phrase itself. Nevertheless this paper will focus on the Pauline use of the prepositional phrases themselves (4). Only then can one answer the question: How was the redeeming effect of Christ's death "for" human sinners perceived and expressed. Finally, as an introduction to the detailed studies on soteriological metaphors in this volume, a brief overview on the way in which Paul combines the metaphorical depiction of salvation with the "for" phrases is given (5).

2. Where Do We Start and How Do We Begin?

2.1. *Where Are We to Start?*

Our construction of Paul should be within an appropriate historical context. Paul is perceived by many of us as a Hellenised Jew who had a visionary and auditory experience through which he understood to be called upon to proclaim the good news of the crucified Christ to the gentiles (cf. Dietzfelbinger 1989). Long after Paul's death, he was still known as a citizen from Tarsus in Cilicia (Acts 9:11; 21:39; 22:3). Before he wrote his first letters, he was in the regions of Cilicia and Syria for almost fourteen years (Gal 1:21; Acts 9:30; 11:25), most probably in the cities of Tarsus and Antioch on the banks of the river Orontes. According to Acts, Barnabas took him to Antioch to help in a Christian congregation of which the founder members were Jewish Christians that had been driven from Jerusalem (Acts 11:19–20, 26).

Paul therefore stands in a twofold tradition. He is a Jew who received his education through the Greek language but within the community of the Diaspora Synagogue. He stems from "Hellenistic Judaism". Even if Acts 22:3 should be interpreted in such a way that Paul was partly educated in Jerusalem (but see du Toit, 2000), this still implies he was part of the Greek speaking community in Jerusalem. He then probably was part of the Jewish community from Cilicia (Acts 6:9). We thus have to seek for the sources of the metaphors used by Paul in depicting the death of Christ, and the effects thereof, within the Greek language. We can readily expect to find the closest parallels in the texts of other Jews who have written in Greek. Paul however, became a Christian. He was initially introduced to the traditions of the first Greeks speaking Christian communities in Damascus and later in Antioch (for a general overview of these traditions, cf. Hahn 2003, 161–179). We therefore have to look at those passages in Paul's letters where he tells us that he is drawing upon tradition (cf. 1 Cor 11:22–25; 15:3–8) or where his style is indicative of the use of traditional Christian language (cf. Gal 1:4; Rom 4:25). In these passages prepositional phrases expressing the effect of the death of Christ occur. Paul's own way of ascribing meaning to the death of Christ should thus be related to pre-Pauline tradition. The Pauline interpretation of the death of Christ is to be

part of the history of early Christian interpretation of the death of Christ (for such a history, cf. Hahn 2003a, 373–410).

With Paul being the earliest Christian author whose writings have been transmitted to us, the question, "Where do we start?" takes us back to the initial stages of the Christian interpretation of Christ's death. It is, however, important to acknowledge the fact that those Christians who interpreted the death of Jesus had to give meaning to his execution by the Romans. They had to give meaning to his execution as an upsurgent messianic King who was suspected to be a threat to the authority of the Empire. He was thus crucified as a political rebel with the charge "King of the Jews" (Mk 15:26) around his neck (cf. Dahl 1960). Early Christians had to make sense of the crucifixion of "a said to be king" (on Paul's interpretation of crucifixion, cf. Wolter 2002). The first interpretation was made by those followers who had a dual experience. They knew the tradition about Jesus' last days in Jerusalem and they believed that God resurrected him from death (on the resurrection formulae cf. du Toit 1989). The early Christian interpretation of Jesus' death only began after Easter. Driven by the conviction that God resurrected him from the dead, meaning was ascribed to the crucifixion of the "King of the Jews", reconsidering the events preceding his death. At this point we should turn to our following question.

2.2. *How Do We Begin? Three Methodological Principles*

2.2.1. Our point of departure should be the identification of those passages within the earliest Christian documents; that means, within the Pauline epistles, which contain the initial oral formulae interpreting the death of Jesus. This approach will uncover the understanding that Paul presupposed and the different nuances he gave to those traditions. The interpretation of the death of Christ in the pre-Pauline and the Pauline passages must be understood in light of the language possibilities within the *Koine* of their time. When Paul and his predecessors attributed significance to the crucifixion of Christ, they had to express the meaning thereof in language. One should therefore take into consideration the direct influence of Greek models of interpretation, expressing the effect of the death of individuals in early passages in the New Testament. As a first principle of guidance it is imperative to note that the expressions that are compared,

resemble as close as possible the linguistic patterns and terminology in the Pauline texts.

2.2.2. In seeking the sources from which the first Christians took everyday language to express the meaning of this new event, the crucifixion of an alleged Jewish king, the following must be kept in mind: Firstly, Israelite tradition never really had to grapple with the meaning of the death of an "innocent" individual.[1] Seen from Jewish tradition, the question as to the possible beneficiary purpose of the death of the crucified "King of the Jews" was a *novum*. There was no exact model into which Jewish Christians could fit in the crucifixion of Jesus. Being confronted with this crucifixion as being that of the "King of the Jews" they had to assign meaning to it. This was a difficult task (cf. Origen, *contra Celsum* 2:16). This leads to a second principle. The crucifixion precedes the interpretation thereof. It sets the margins for the metaphorical language in which the meaning of the crucifixion could be expressed. This basic fact compels us to study the possible Jewish influence on the early Christian interpretation of the death of Christ from their perspective of *how* the *crucifixion* was perceived.

2.2.3. It should also be kept in mind that early Christian interpretation of the death of Jesus as "King of the Jews" did not develop along one line only. The first Christians responsible for handing down Christian texts were almost all Greek speaking Jews. They were not bound to models of interpretation inherited from their Jewish culture. Being rooted within Hellenistic Judaism, they had a long tradition, given a boost by the LXX translation, of using Greek concepts and imagery to express their Jewish beliefs. We should, as a third methodological principle, forget neither the influence of the Greek language nor that of the Greek bible on the way in which Greek speaking Jewish Christians assigned meaning to the death

[1] The exception to this rule is the death of Maccabean martyrs. The possibility of common ground between Pauline terminology and 2nd and 4th Maccabees has been investigated elsewhere (cf. Breytenbach 2003 and 2004; Eschner 2005). The second possible exception is that of the suffering servant of the Lord. It is, however, a wildly accepted and well known fact that Isaiah 53 did not play a role in the formulation of early Judaic tradition (cf. Hegermann; Hooker). Apart from its early Christian reception, this text was kept silent.

Christ. Sometimes they took their imagery from their bible. In other cases they did not. In both cases however, they expressed their belief in the Greek language.

3. Which Traditional Metaphors were Available to Paul?

3.1. *Pauline Soteriology and the Language of the Greek Bible*

Paul as well as those who formulated the effect of the death of Christ before him, utilised the language of the Greek bible to explain the meaning of Christ's death.

3.1.1. *"Forgiveness" and Related Notions in Pre-Pauline Tradition*

3.1.1.1. The promise of the remittance of sins was central to the proclamation of John the Baptist (Mark 1:4; Luke 1:77; 3:3) and to the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth (Q 11:4/6:12; Mark 11:25; Q 17:3–4/18:15, 21–2). "Forgiveness" (ἄφεσις) of sins became central to the teaching of the synoptic Gospels and Acts (cf. Breytenbach 2000a, 1739–42). In the letters normally attributed to Paul however, the noun ἄφεσις is absent.

3.1.1.2. The notion "to forgive" is confined to *Romans 4:7* were LXX Ps 31:1–2 is cited. In Greek the verb ἀφίημι means to release from legal obligation, i.e. to remit (cf. Breytenbach 2000a, 1737–8) and can designate the remittance of legal punishment. In this sense it was used by Jews who wrote Greek (cf. Josephus, *ant. Iud.* 6:92; 15:356) and translated the Hebrew texts into Greek (1 Macc 13:39; BDAG, *s.v.*). Paul quoted the translation LXX Ps 31:1 unaltered:[2] "Blessed are those whose lawlessness was remitted." The translation suited his view of God who remitted the lawlessness of those who, in a legal sense, were justified through faith (cf. du Toit 2005).

3.1.1.3. *2nd Corinthians 5:19a + b* might draw on tradition (Breytenbach 1989, 118–9). Four peculiarities might indicate its use: Even though Paul uses λογίζομαι frequently, this passage does echo LXX Ps 31:2

[2] In the case of Ps 31:1 it translates נשׂא "to take away".

which is cited in Rom 4:8. The use of τὰ παραπτώματα is confined to tradition (Rom 4:25). A *coniugatio periphrastica* is not typical Pauline style (Here ἦν . . . καταλλάσσων foregrounds God as subject of the action of "reconciliation"—cf. Breytenbach 2005), the continuity of which is expressed vividly. Paul connected the traditional parallelism as subjective cause to verse 18 by ὡς introducing it by ὅτι:

> θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ,
> μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν

The phrase μὴ λογιζόμενος makes use of language from the realm of accounting and depicts the way in which God deals with the sin of the whole human world. "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them."

3.1.1.4. Since Käsemann's seminal essay (1950/51), it is commonplace that Paul utilized tradition in *Romans 3:25*. According to verse 25b God's righteousness was demonstrated because of his disregard (διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν) of former sins. He thus "passed over" former sins, leaving them unpunished (on Rom 3:25a cf. *infra*).

3.1.1.5. *In conclusion* it seems that in letters normally attributed to Paul, "forgiveness" is confined to passages drawing on pre-Pauline tradition. This is clearly the case in Rom 4:7–8 where LXX Ps 30:1–2 is cited. In Rom 3:25b and 2 Cor 5:19b, the only other cases where Paul mentions that sins will not be accounted for, he most likely alludes to formulas expressing early Christian beliefs on the saving function of Christ (cf. *supra*). For the rest, Paul is not forgiving, he is more than forgiving. This is grounded in his understanding of Christ's death. We now turn to its explication.

3.1.2. *Prepositional Phrases of the Death of Christ in Allusions to the Greek Bible*

3.1.2.1. The parallelism of *2nd Corinthians 5:21* not only stresses the sinlessness of the one that knew no sin; but with an *abstractum pro concreto* it is formulated that God, the subject of ἐποίησεν made Christ (the participle refers back to verses 19–20), who knew no sin (τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν), a sinner (ἁμαρτίαν for ἁμαρτωλόν). It is possible that in this case, Paul used formulaic language (cf. Breytenbach 1989, 137–8). This passage can be interpreted in such a way that

Christ took the place (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν) of those who were sinners; "he who knew no sin" was made a sinner in place of the sinners. If interpreted in this way, this passage formulates an interchange (cf. Hooker 1971) and raises the question as to whether this is a case of a vicarious suffering of judgement. This text also reflects the influence of LXX Isaiah 53, especially verse 9: "he did no iniquity" (ἀνομίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν). As the suffering servant took upon him the judgement which was meant for the sinners (Isaiah 53:4), Christ was made a sinner in the place of the sinners. Albeit that they are not as clear as in the case of 1 Peter 2:21–25 (cf. Breytenbach 2005a), there are clear similarities between 2 Cor 5:21 and the Greek text of the book of Isaiah. The ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν phrase expressing the effect of the death however, cannot be explained as an allusion to the 2nd servant song (cf. *infra* 3.2.8).

3.1.2.2. Very similarly *Galatians 3:13* expresses the idea of interchange. Again Christ is depicted as the one who took the place of Paul and those he includes in his "we". He and the other Jewish Christians were "under the curse of the law" (Gal 3:10). In Gal 3:13 the crucifixion of Christ is presented in the language of the Greek bible. Paul follows Jewish interpretation of Deut 21:23 (cf. 4Q169 *[pNah]* frag. 3, 1:7–8; 11Q19 *[Temp]* 64:7–12) and uses the phrase, "everyone who hangs from a tree," (πᾶς ὁ κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ χύλου) to refer to Jesus' crucifixion. Christ became a curse "for us" (Χριστὸς . . . γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρα). He was cursed by God.[3] The result of him becoming a curse ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν is expressed by Paul through the metaphor of "redemption" (cf. Tolmie 2005). Christ redeemed those who did not abide by all things written in the book of the law, and did not do them (cf. Deut 27:26). His crucifixion as a cursed person is understood to be in place of those under the curse of the law, in order for them to be freed from the curse placed on those who have transgressed the law. The blessing he had as seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16), became the blessing of the nations (Gal 3:14). The ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν phrase however, cannot be explained in the light of Deut 21:23 as inter-text. It rather occurs often in texts attributed to pre-Pauline tradition, on which we will focus in 3.2.

[3] Cf. LXX Deut 21.23: οὐκ ἐπικοιμηθήσεται τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ ξύλου.

3.1.2.3. Metaphorical Mapping of Septuagint Cultic Language onto the Death of Christ

Paul rarely uses cultic language to explain the effect of the death of Christ. Citing LXX Ps 31:2 in Rom 4:7, he hails those whose sins are covered, as blessed (μακάριοι . . . ὧν ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι). But the blessing does not tell us that the covering of the sin is through the death of Christ. The letters of Paul do not make use of the language of expiation (e.g. ἱλάσκομαι cf. Breytenbach 1993, 66–7), we are thus left with the traditional passage (cf. Käsemann 1950/51) *Romans 3:25* as the only passage in Paul's letters where the death of Christ through crucifixion might be explained by the metaphoric transfer of cultic language. This is however, far from certain (cf. the discussion in Fryer 1987; Krauss 1991). Only if one ignores the absence of the article τό, which is necessary to turn the adjective ἱλαστήριον into a noun, is a translation with "place of appeasement" possible. It is imperative to realize that ἱλαστήριον adjuncts to ὃν. The relative thus refers back to Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ in verse 24. The semantic content of the utterance ὅν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον, accordingly, is that (in a completed action—cf. the aorist) God made Christ Jesus publicly available (προτίθημι—BDAG *s.v.*) as "a place of propitiation". Since the notion of appeasement or propitiation is so foreign to the first Christians and their Greek bible (cf. Breytenbach 2000 and 2000b) one should refrain from introducing such a notion. One should rather assign the meaning of the substantive τό ἱλαστήριον in the Greek bible to the assumed substantive ἱλαστήριον in Rom 3:25. When read in this way, the pre-Pauline tradition that Paul quotes refers to the cross of Christ Jesus as a public "place of expiation". This is a highly polemical utterance. The ἱλαστήριον, the place of God's merciful presence (for this meaning cf. Deissmann 1903),[4] is no longer above the lid of the ark of the covenant in the holiest of the holies in the temple, but now the public crucifixion of Christ Jesus. The prepositional phrase ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι explains the modus through which God made him publicly available: through the shedding of his blood, i.e. through his violent death by crucifixion. Even if the phrase, "through his blood," is read against the backdrop of sacrificial rites, that imagery is transferred to depict the uncultic and non-ritual execution by crucifixion.

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[4] Cf. Janowski (2000, 374–362) for the similar meaning of the underlying Hebrew notion of *kapporet*.

3.2. *Prepositional Phrases Explicating the Death of Christ in pre-Pauline Tradition*

3.2.1. *Paul and pre-Pauline Tradition*

Paul was not the only one to express the meaning of Christ's death and was not the first to do so. In fact, in quite a number of cases he drew on interpretations of Christ's death that were made by others. Those who for the first time assigned meaning to the death of Christ by using the Greek language had to transfer meaning across semantic boundaries. They explained the new, the meaning of Christ's death, in terms of known semantic fields, thus depicting the target domain (death of Christ) in terms of the source domain from which the imagery was taken.[5] In this section we take a closer look at the pre-Pauline early Christian tradition regarding the implications of Christ's death.

3.2.2. *Linguistic Evidence*

If we look at the linguistic patterns, one initial observation can be made. The effect of the death of Christ is, *inter alia*, expressed by either the Greek phrases ὑπέρ or περί with genitive or διά with accusative. It follows naturally from our comparison that the way in which Paul understood the effect of Christ's "dying for" or "being delivered for" must be grasped in such a way that it can be expressed by any of these three cases, since Paul uses them alternatively. Which relation between the action expressed in the verb and the effect caused by that action can be expressed by phrases ὑπέρ or περί with genitive or διά with the accusative? This is the case in the sense of "for", "to the benefit of". That διά + accusative can have this meaning for Paul is clear from 1 Cor 8:11 and 2 Cor 8:9. That he uses ὑπέρ in this sense is clear from Rom 5:7. Those who copied his letters had no hesitation to substitute his ὑπέρ with περί in the sense of *pro*. This is clear from the *varia lectionis* to Gal 1:4 and 1 Thess 5:10 (cf. *infra*). The explication of the effect of Christ's death ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν by means of final clauses in 1 Thess 5:10 (ἵνα . . . ἅμα σὺν αὐτῷ ζήσωμεν) and in 2 Cor 5:15 (ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν ἀλλὰ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι) clearly illustrates that

[5] It is not necessary to venture into the difficulties of metaphor theory here. Cf. Lakoff and Johnson (1985) for the position taken here.

Christ died *for* a specific purpose. The phrase ἀποθνῄσκειν ὑπέρ τινος can justly be interpreted as "to die for the benefit of someone". That ὑπέρ can be understood in the sense of ἀντί "in the place of" has to be indicated by the context, this is not inherent to the phrase ἀποθνῄσκειν ὑπέρ τινος. There are instances, however, where such an interpretation seems to fit the context best (cf. especially 2 Cor 5:14; Rom 5:6, 8 and Joh 11:50–51).

Before we treat the so called ὑπέρ- formulae further, it is necessary to take cognisance of the text-critical tradition. We know that in the Koine there is a tendency that—in the sense of "for" (*pro*)—περί + genitive suppressed ὑπέρ + genitive (cf. Zerwick 1963, § 96; BDR § 229.1) This is clearly illustrated by the manuscript tradition on Gal 1:4 and 1 Thess 5:10. In Gal 1:4 P^{46vid}, ℵ* A D F G, 1739 1881 and the Koine tradition read τοῦ δόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν instead of περὶ κτλ. In 1 Thess 5:10 the reading τοῦ ἀποθανόντος περὶ ἡμῶν is supported by ℵ*, B and 33. It is not only περί that has been extended in use. Διά with accusative need not be confined to a causal use (*propter*), it might also be used in a final sense (*pro* or like ἕνεκα). The fact that Paul can alternate between ὁ ἀδελφὸς δι' ὃν Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν in 1 Cor 8:11 and ἐκεῖνον ἀπόλλυε ὑπὲρ οὗ Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν in Rom 14:15 illustrates this point. In the ἀποθνῄσκειν ὑπέρ τινος phrase the ὑπέρ seems to indicate a relation between the death of Christ and the one affected by it, which can also be expressed by ἀποθνῄσκειν περίτινος or ἀποθνῄσκειν διά τινα.

3.2.3. 1 Corinthians 11:24

In *1 Cor 11:24* Paul tells us that the formulation, "This is my body for you", goes back to Jesus. Long before Paul came to Antioch, Christians commemorated the night in which Jesus was betrayed by breaking bread, quoting Jesus who is reported to have said: "This is my body" (Mk 14:22). Although the pre-Pauline strand of tradition adds ". . . for you" (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν), the source domain from which ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν has been transferred, cannot clearly be inferred from any variation of the *verba testamenti* of the Lord's supper. From 1 Cor 11:24, is clear that on the night he was betrayed and condemned to be crucified, Jesus broke the bread and gave it to his followers with the words, "this is my body for you". This symbolic act shows that the eminent breaking of his body was understood to be to the benefit of his followers. It is however not clear from verse 24 in which sense they were to benefit from it.

3.2.4. 1 Corinthians 15:3b

1 Cor. 15:3b, however, quotes another pre-Pauline tradition formulating, "Christ died for our sins". From this phrase we can learn three things. Firstly, it is an interpretation of the death of Christ, the Messiah, the King of the Jews. Secondly, albeit that the linguistic pattern ἀποθνῆσκειν ὑπέρ τινος is deeply rooted within Greek tradition, the phrase has its own peculiarities. In the Greek tradition "dying for" can be to the benefit of humans or a better and greater ideal, e.g. the πόλις. It is evident that "our sins" in 1 Cor 15:3b does not fit into this pattern and must therefore be explained differently. Finally, the phrase, "for our sins", has the effect of taking away the consequences of the sins of those who were meant by the "us". Since I have dealt with this topic *in extenso* recently (cf. Breytenbach, 2003), it should suffice to note that the uncommon combination of the ἀποθνῆσκειν ὑπέρ-phrase with ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν in 1 Cor 15:3b presupposes that the Greek tradition of "dying for" has been conflated with the Israelite-Jewish concept, that death takes away the consequences of sins. English speaking theologians often call this "atonement" or "expiation", but, with the exception of Rom 3:25, Paul never uses a Greek equivalent for such a notion. In 1 Cor 15:3b he abstains from explaining the formulaic phrase in such a sense. There are two obvious reasons for this: Paul merely quotes the tradition and the ὑπέρ-phrase does not suggest a cultic background when expressing the effect of the verb ἀποθνήσκειν.

3.2.5. Romans 8:3

The anacoluthon at the end of τῆς σαρκός in *Rom 8:3* could indicate that Paul draws on a tradition that also emerges in Gal 4:4 and in the Johannine tradition (cf. Joh 3:16 and 1 Joh 4:9). The emphasis in Rom 8:3, however, is on the phrase κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί. God judged sin in the incarnate Son, the verb signalling the legal imagery by which the sending of the Son is explained (cf. BDAG, *s.v.*). The immediate purpose of the passing of the sentence is stated by the phrase περὶ ἁμαρτίας, which can be translated as "concerning sins", meaning "to take away the consequences of sins" (cf. BDAG, *s.v.*). In this case it is possible to argue that Paul's use of terminology indicates a conflation of imagery from the realm of the expiation of sins (cf. Breytenbach 1989a; 1993, 73–75) and legal terminology. The περὶ ἁμαρτίας phrase refers to the abolition of sin's consequences. As in the case of the ὑπὲρ τῶν

ἁμαρτιῶν phrase in 1 Cor 15:3b, no explicit terminology of expiation is used. Following the text, we refrain from introducing it.

3.2.6. Galatians 1:4a

The influence of traditional language becomes evident if one takes formulaic passages into account, which divert stylistically from the surrounding argument. According to *Gal 1:4a* Jesus Christ delivered himself "for our sins" (ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν).[6] The *v.l.* of $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$, ℵ*, A, D and other manuscripts with περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν suggest that the reading should be as in the case of 1 Cor 15:3b. Christ died, gave himself to take away the effects of the sins of the believers. The text of 1 Cor 15:3b merges the tradition of the expiation of sins with the Greek tradition of the "dying for". In the case of Gal 1:4 this might apply too. There is, however, another possibility. Even though it is Paul's words, there are three reasons to assume that he uses traditional language. Firstly, there is the affinity between Gal 1, 4a and *Rom 4:25a.* The latter is commonly regarded to be a traditional parallelism. Secondly, the use of the verb (παρα-)δίδωμι which in both cases could resound LXX Isaiah 53:12. Lastly, the verb could also allude to early Christian tradition. Jesus was betrayed (παραδίδουναι) by Judas (1 Cor 11:23; Mk 14:11, 18, 21, 41) and handed over (παραδίδουναι) to the Romans for punishment (Mk 15:1, 10, 15; Acts 3:13). There is, however, one essential difference between Gal 1:4 and Rom 4:25a on the one hand, and Isaiah 53 on the other. According to LXX Isaiah 53:12, the ψυχή of the servant was delivered unto death (παρεδόθη εἰς θάνατον). He was delivered because of the iniquities of the people (διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν παρεδόθη). The sins of the community thus caused the death of the servant. Could Gal 1:4a be interpreted in the same vein? Did Jesus Christ give himself "because of our sins"? If so, this interpretation could also hold for Rom 4:25a where the parallel to LXX Isaiah 53:12 is even clearer: ὃς (sc. Ἰησοῦς ὁ κύριος) διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν παρεδόθη.[7] In the light of 1 Cor 15:3b; Rom 8:3 and Rom 4:25b (καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν), however, it is more likely that Paul himself understood the tradition behind Rom 4:25a, and thus Gal 1:4a

[6] Aland, Kurt, Black, Matthew, Martini, Carlo M., Metzger, Bruce M., and Wikgren, Allen, *The Greek New Testament*, (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft Stuttgart) 1983.
[7] Cf. *infra* 3.2.8.

in the sense of "concerning sins/trespasses" meaning that the deliverance took away the consequences of sin. This becomes clear when one takes note of Gal 1:4b, "to set us free from the present *evil* age."[8] Paul, the ἀδελφοί with him, and the Galatian congregations will not perish with the present evil age. As in the case of the ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν phrase in 1 Cor 15:3b and the περὶ ἁμαρτίας phrase in Rom 8:3, no terminology of expiation is used in Gal 1:4 and Rom 4:25a. The περὶ/ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν or διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν phrases express that the consequences of sin will not take effect. Neither they nor the governing verb (παρα-)δίδωμι indicate a specific cultic background, in terms of which, the abolition of the effect of sins has to be interpreted.

3.2.7. *In Conclusion*

The broader context of the Jewish-Christian interpretation of the death of Christ (1 Cor 15:3b), respectively of his self deliverance (Gal 1:4), or being delivered (Rom 4:25a), or his mission (Rom 8:3), is that the death on the cross disrupts the sequence between human sin and death (cf. Rom 6:23). It might thus be stated that this strand of pre-Pauline tradition understands the death of Christ as being "concerning sin", thus taking away the effect of sin or trespasses. The prepositional phrases with sins or trespasses do not indicate a specific background. In the case of those governed by the verb (παρα-)δίδωμι, influence of LXX Isaiah 53:6, 12 cannot be excluded.

3.2.8. *Galatians 2:20 and Romans 8:32*

Galatians 2:20 and Romans 8:32 will take us beyond the analysis of possible pre-Pauline phrases. The traditional formulaic language underlying Gal 1:4 and Rom 4:25 is used in both cases, Gal 2:20 and Rom 8:32. Because Paul is merely alluding to this tradition, he formulates more freely and introduces υἱός as subject or object of παραδίδωμι. He could be revealing further influence of LXX Isaiah

[8] I refer to *1 Thess 1:9–10*, another utterance in which Paul drew heavily on traditional language, only briefly, since here the death of Christ is not in focus. The conversion to the living God is sustained in the waiting for his Son, the Saviour (Ἰησοῦν τὸν ρυόμενον) of the Thessalonians from the eminent ὀργή. That salvation means to be saved from this world, was already part of the pre-Pauline tradition in Gal 1:4. In Thess 1:10 the emphasis is salvation from the judgement at the day of the Lord (cf. 1 Thess 5:10).

53 (cf. the παιδίον of verse 2).[9] Although there is common ground between the παραδίδωμι passages and LXX Isaiah 53, the extent of its influence on the Pauline passages must be left open, until the possible traditio-historical connections between these texts and the ἀποθνήσκειν ὑπέρ τινος phrases (cf. *supra*), have been clarified.[10] Two things should be kept in mind: Firstly, the Greek text of Isaiah 53 is formulated in such a way that there is no reason to introduce the idea of cultic expiation of sins into its interpretation of the suffering of the servant. Even the phrase καὶ κύριος παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἡμῶν in verse 6–7 has to be interpreted in the light of the διά-phrases in preceding verses so that it ought to be translated: "But he was wounded on account of our sins, and was bruised because of our iniquities . . . and the Lord gave him up because of our sins." He suffered punishment for their sake (cf. Janowski 1993). Verse 12 confirms this interpretation (cf. *supra*). From this it follows that whoever wants to interpret Gal 1:4; 2:20; Rom 4:25; 8:32 in light of the suffering of the servant of Isaiah 53, has to follow Isaiah and understand the sins or the transgressions of the "us" as the reason why the Son has been delivered or has handed himself over. This however is not expiation of sins but vicarious suffering. In light of the διά with accusative in Rom 4:25a one has to accommodate the possibility that Paul was familiar with the interpretation of the deliverance of the Son in the light of the Greek text of Isaiah 53—a tradition according to which the crucifixion was understood as an act in which Jesus was (passively) delivered because of the transgressions of the community of believers, a notion used in 1 Peter 2:21–25 and 3:18 (cf. Breytenbach 2005a).

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[9] It might be noted that, parallel to John 3:16 the title "Son" has been introduced in Gal 2:20 and Rom 8:32. The absence of the title in Gal 1:4 and Rom 4:25 can be explained. In Gal 1:4 Paul links the participle to the normal phrase within the salutation. "Peace from God our father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, who delivered himself. . . ." Here the introduction of the title "Son" would have been very unusual and pleonastic. In Rom 4:24–25 Paul fuses two pieces of formulaic language. The resurrection formula, "God resurrected Jesus our Lord from the dead" supplies the subject for the following parallelism on the deliverance. Thus Paul could connect the formula in which Isaiah 5:12 resounds with a simple relative pronoun.

[10] For more detail, cf. Eschner (2005).

4. How did Paul Express the Effect of the Death of Christ on Human Kind?

4.1. It should be kept in mind though, that Paul cites tradition or alludes to it because he agrees to it. On the other hand, his reception of traditional ways of assigning meaning to the death of Christ blends the tradition into the argument and strategy of his own letter, often setting particular accents. Even more important: in many cases it becomes clear that Paul was familiar with the source domain from which his predecessors took their imagery. Paul developed his imagery to assign meaning to the death of Christ not in dependence on pre-Pauline tradition. Although in interaction with this tradition, as a Hellenised Jew, he independently utilised the semantic possibilities of his Greek mother tongue to ascribe meaning to the death of Christ.

In the texts we have treated so far, the death of *Christ* was understood to benefit those who formulated these texts—"this is my body *for you*" (1 Cor 11:24—ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν). "*Christ* died for *our* sins" (1 Cor 15:3—ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν), the Lord Jesus Christ "gave himself up for *our* sins" (Gal 1:4—ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν), the Lord Jesus was delivered because of/for *our* transgressions (Rom 4:25a—διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν), "God made *Christ* who knew no sin a sinner in *our* place" (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν—2 Cor 5:21), "*Christ* became a cursed in *our* place" (Gal 3:13—ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν).

When considering the passages where the ἀποθνήσκειν ὑπέρ τινος phrase occurs in a Pauline sentence—in a sentence not clearly be identified as pre-Pauline tradition—three observations can be made. Firstly, the death of Christ is presented as an act of love by himself (2 Cor 5:14) or by God (Rom 5:8). Secondly though, the ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν is expanded into a ὑπὲρ πάντων (2 Cor 5:14–15) or ὑπὲρ ἀσεβῶν (Rom 5:6); or the brother for whom Christ died is specified (1 Cor 8:11 δι' ὅν; Rom 14:15 ὑπὲρ οὗ). Finally, the qualification περὶ/ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν is absent. Paul merely states that Christ died (e.g. 1 Thess 4:14; Gal 2:21) or that Christ "died for us" without any further qualification (cf. 1 Thess 5:10—περὶ/ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν). We should start our next deliberation from this ultimate observation.

4.2. It is commonplace to regard the phrase without the τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν as a shorter version of the tradition in 1 Cor 15:3b, but it might

be incorrect. The versions in 1 Cor 8:11 and Rom 14:15 suggest that Paul used the formula in such a way that he interpreted the crucifixion as Christ dying for *persons*. The interpretation utilises the Greek tradition of someone dying for someone else. Paul knew this motive, as can be seen from Rom 6:7 (for more detail, cf. Breytenbach 2003). As argued (cf. *supra* 3.2.4), 1 Cor 15:3b deviates considerably from the linguistic pattern and conceptual background of the ἀποθνήσκειν ὑπέρ τινος phrase. Paul's reception of the traditional formula and the way in which he understood it, can be illustrated by referring to Rom 5:8. The *genitivus absolutus* qualifies in which state the ἡμεῖς were when Christ died "for" them "as we were still sinners". Paul thus moves from the tradition "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor 15:3b) to Christ died for us sinners. This explains why he could start his deliberations in Rom 5:6 with "as we were still weak, Christ died for the ungodly" (Χριστὸς . . . ὑπὲρ ἀσεβῶν ἀπέθανεν). From this understanding one can easily turn to 2 Cor 5:14: "one died for all" (εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν). For Paul all human beings are sinners (Rom 3:9, 23; 5:12d). In the light of this anthropology he had to broaden the understanding of the effect of Christ's death. Christ did not die merely for the sins of his followers, but he died for them as being sinners and thus for the ungodly, for all, for humankind. The death of Christ should in this sense be understood as being beneficial to all sinful human beings. This theological insight could be seen as one of the driving forces behind Paul's mission to the gentiles.

Before pursuing this observation any further, we have to look at the (παρα-)δίδωμι ὑπέρ τινος phrases. In these examples the tradition in Gal 1:4 and Rom 4:25a was formulated in such a way that Christ "was given up because of our transgressions" (Rom 4:25a), or that Jesus Christ gave himself up because of our sins (Gal 1:4). In his reception of this tradition Paul again dropped the sins and shortened: God gave up his own Son "for all of us" (Rom 8:32—ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων). Be it that the legal context of the deliverance of Jesus unto the Romans still echoes in the context, the question, "in what sense was the deliverance 'for all of us'?" should be answered in congruence with the whole of Rom 5–8. The Son was delivered for "all of us" as sinners. In order to understand the effect the death of Christ had on sinners, we must return to the "dying for"-texts in Paul's letters.

Read against the backdrop of the Greek notion of "dying for", 2 Cor 5:14 draws a unfamiliar consequence (ἄρα) from the death of one for all (εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν). They are all dead (οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον). Christ's death for the ungodly or humankind is depicted as an act of love, but it does result in the redemption but in the death of humankind. In connection with the deliverance tradition Paul draws a similar consequence, as can be inferred from Gal 2:20. The Son of God delivered himself for Paul (ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ) with the result that Paul "died". How is this to be understood?

4.3. Before continuing this discussion, let me briefly *summarise*. Paul inherited the tradition that Christ died "for our sins", or that he was delivered "concerning our sins". He developed the interpretation of the death on the cross in a fourfold manner. In the first instance he *personalises* the tradition. Christ died for persons; the Son of God delivered himself for Paul. Secondly he *universalises* the tradition. Christ died for us "when we still were sinners"; he thus died "for the ungodly", that is, "for all". Thirdly, the death is an expression of *love*. Finally the death results in salvation (Rom 5:8; 2 Cor 5:15).

4.4. We return to the (traditional) passages in Gal 3:13 and 2 Cor 5:21 and the idea that the status of Christ and "us" as the cursed and the sinners were exchanged. God cursed Christ, made him who knew no sin a sinner, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. In light of these passages the preceding texts, Gal 2:20 and 2 Cor 5:14 respectively, cannot but be interpreted as that the Son gave himself up in Paul's place (Gal 2:20) and if one dies in the place of all, all are dead (2 Cor 5:14). Rom 5:8 enhances this interpretation even more: Christ died as sinner in the place of ἡμεῖς "when we still were sinners". Words like "substitution" or "representation" are often used to express this process of interchange, but I refrain from introducing traditional dogmatic notions in the interpretation of the ὑπέρ formulation in 2 Cor 5:14; Gal 2:20 and Rom 5:6, 8. It is clear that Christ took the position in which those who benefit from his death had been in. If we conclude that the death of Christ "for all" results in the death of ungodly human kind, we still have to pursue our initial question further.

4.5. How did Paul think this to be possible? In an attempt to answer this question, I can merely try to explicate my perception of his logic. The (παρα-)δίδωμι ὑπέρ τινος phrases might render help.

4.5.1. As has been re-emphasised by du Toit (2005) παραδίδωμι τίνα τινι is a forensic term, designating the handing over of someone to be punished. The passion narratives in the Gospels clearly form the backdrop when Paul interprets the deliverance of Christ, the Son of God. He was handed over to be punished (cf. *supra*). The forensic overtones on Gal 2:20; Rom 8:3, 32 are clear. Paul understands the death of Christ as the consequence of the judgement by God. He cursed Christ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν (Gal 3:13), he condemned sin in the incarnated Son of God (Rom 8:3). The crucifixion should therefore be understood as a prolepsis of the eschatological judgement by God. He delivered and condemned Christ, instead of the ungodly, instead of all.

3.5.2. A far as the "dying for" tradition is concerned, Paul introduces an awkward twist to the Greek motif (cf. Breytenbach 2003). Those Christ died for, are not saved by his death as Alkestis' husband was saved by her death. Paul does not adhere to the view of Caiaphas who expected Jesus' death to save the ἔθνος (Joh 11:50–51). In 2 Cor 5:14 Paul states his view clearly: all have died. Paul implies that Christ's death includes the whole of humankind. The same line of argument is found in Rom 8:3: God sent his only son ἐν ὁμοίωματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας. He represents humankind when he is made a sinner (2 Cor 5:21), a cursed (Gal 3:13) delivered for punishment. We now turn to our last question.

5. How are Human Sinners Saved Through the Effect of Christ's Death?

The crucifixion is an eschatological event, a prolepsis of judgement. It benefits all. Does this mean that all are acquitted? This brings us to our next question.

5.1. *How Does an Individual Become Part of Christ's Death?*

The question demands a closer look into the so-called σύν-formula. Be it the συναποθνήσκω or the συζάω phrases, Paul speaks of Christians only. He died with Christ, and thus lives no longer (Gal 2:20). The believers in Thessalonica will live with Jesus Christ (1 Thess 5:10). According to Paul, those that are baptized are immersed into the

body of the crucified. The baptism of believers is their integration into the body of Christ. They died with him, were buried with him, trusting to live with him (Rom 6:8). Paul's belief that the believer is baptized into Christ's death has the consequence that the sinner died with Christ and that the power of sin is terminated. In Pauline theology, sinners need not be forgiven during baptism, they die with Christ and the Spirit of the resurrected Christ rises newly created children of God from the water. Paul must have known the common Christian view that baptism results in the forgiveness of sins (cf. Acts 2:38; Col 2:13), but his view on baptism supersedes the pre-Pauline conception. It does not do away with sins; it abolishes the cause of sin, the sinners themselves.

Another key text to consider is 1 Cor 10:16. Through the Lord's Supper believers experience participation (κοινωνία) in the body of the crucified. Baptism and the Lord's Supper integrate those who are baptized and remember the death of the Lord into his body and end their old existence. This is what Paul means when saying when someone is "in Christ" the old has passed (τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν—2 Cor 5:17).

5.2. *What Is Achieved by the Death of Christ?*

Our last section was concluded with a reference to 2 Cor 5:17. When somebody is ἐν Χριστῷ that what is old, has passed. Paul, however, drew the positive consequence first: εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις. New creation is by the creator. It is not possible to go into detail on the manner in which Paul models the creation of the new human being "in Christ" on the resurrection of the crucified through the spirit of him who resurrected Christ from the dead (cf. Rom 8:11; Breytenbach 1999, 288–9). One important question to ask is: What is the relation between "Christ dying for" or "the only Son being delivered unto" and the status of those affected by his death? I suggest we first analyse the present consequences of the death of Christ. He "died for" or was "delivered for" the sinners. These so called ὑπέρ-phrases form the basis of Paul's soteriology. These formulae occur from 1 Thess through Gal, 1 Cor, 2 Cor and Rom. In order to explain what the death of Christ has achieved, Paul presupposes the effect of the resurrection on the believer and then, by means of different metaphors, illustrates the change in the status of the former sinners in their relationship to God.

5.2.1. According to 1 Thess 5:9–10, Jesus Christ died "for us" in order that "we" might live with him. In his first extant letter Paul does not elaborate on the current status of the Thessalonian believers. They await the resurrected Lord as the future rescuer (τὸν ῥυόμενον) from eschatological judgement (cf. 1 Thess 1:10). Through this faith they distinguish themselves from the non-believers who have no hope (4:13, for further details cf. de Villiers 2005). They will be judged, but the Son will save them from future judgement.

5.2.2. In Gal the focus is more directed towards the present status of the non-Jewish Christians. Notably σῴζω and derivates are absent from this letter and the focus on the present is clear from the outset: The Lord Jesus Christ gave himself up because of our sins "in order that he might rescue (ἐξέληται) us out of the present evil age" (Gal 1:4). Paul ventures to convince the Galatians that they have already been liberated from the enslaving powers of the weak and poor elements of this world. A return to circumcision and the law will result in the loss of their freedom as well as a new enslavement analogous to slavery they had left (cf. Gal 4:8–10). Christ's death ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν had already liberated them from the curse of the law. Important for them is to embrace their new creation by the spirit. Christ, by becoming a cursed person (cf. *supra* on Gal 3:13), bought "us" from the curse of the law. The curse of the law is compared to the former enslavement under the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. The heathen Galatians were redeemed from this status as slaves by the Son of God in order to become children of God (Gal 4:3–7). Paul utilises the redemption (the buying out) of slaves and their adoption as children, metaphorically, to illustrate the new status of the Galatians. The basis for this change, however, is the death of Christ for the cursed (for further details cf. Tolmie 2005).

5.2.3. In 1 Cor Paul quotes the tradition that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor 15:3) as part of the tradition that he was resurrected on the third day. In this case he does not elaborate on the notion of "dying for". In 1 Cor 8:11, however, he uses it in a paranetic context referring to the weak as the brother for whom Christ died (ὁ ἀδελφὸς δι' ὃν Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν). The formulation with διά + accusative clearly indicates that Paul understands the death of Christ as being "to the benefit of". "The one for whom Christ died" (ἐκεῖνον . . . ὑπὲρ οὗ Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν—Rom 14:15) should be understood in the same way.

5.2.4. In 2 Cor 5:11–6:1 Paul defends his apostleship. He includes himself in the πάντων for which Christ died; regards himself in this way as one of those who died (cf. 2 Cor 5:14). That is why he can conclude: "The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." As a new creation, Paul is entrusted with administering reconciliation (2 Cor 5:19c). As God's ambassador representing Christ, he begs the Corinthians to be reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:20). The reconciliation is only possible through the death of Christ. Paul uses the imagery of reconciliation to explain the new status he has attained through the death of Christ (2 Cor 5:18–20. For further details cf. Breytenbach, 2005).

5.2.5. 2 Cor 5:18–20 leads us to *Rom 5:8–11*. Paul parallels the reconciliation of the enemies of God to God through the death of his Son with the justification of the sinners through his brutal death (ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ).[11] Through the death of Christ those whose sins made them enemies of God were changed into his reconciled friends. Through the crucifixion the ungodly sinners became justified. In this new status of justified reconciled humans the believers will be saved by the living Son from eschatological judgement. As in 2 Cor 5 the metaphors of reconciliation and justification (for more detail cf. du Toit 2005) are used in accordance with the argumentative strategy of Paul's letter to the Romans.

6. Summary

Paul seems to understand Christ's beneficiary death "for" as a prolepsis of the eschatological judgement in which the old existence was terminated. This opens the possibility for a newly created humanity in Christ. The "newness" of those in Christ is explained by metaphors taken from diverse backgrounds. Paul describes the new status of those in Christ as being freed from slavery and adopted children (Galatians), as being changed from enemies to friends, being reconciled to God (2 Cor 5 and Rom 5) or as former sinners or ungodly people who have been justified (Rom 5 and 2 Cor 5). With this newly achieved status, those in Christ attain a completely new relationship

[11] The phrase does not have sacrificial overtones; cf. BDAG *s.v.* 2 (b).

to God. As children, reconciled friends and justified humans they can expect to be saved through the exalted Son from final judgement.

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CHAPTER TWO

ΧΑΡΙΣ IN PAUL: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE APOSTLE'S "PERFORMATIVE" APPLICATION OF THE LANGUAGE OF *GRACE* WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF HIS THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON THE EVENT/PROCESS OF SALVATION

Stephan J. Joubert
University of Pretoria

1. Introduction

The aim of this investigation is to come to terms with the use of χάρις (usually translated as "grace") in Paul within the overarching framework of his soteriology. In order to understand why and how the apostle uses this concept in his intratextual reflections on God's eschatological act of salvation in Christ, the basic building blocks of his theology need to be identified and related to the different semantic nuances that he attached to χάρις on the surface level of his letters. At the same time, the meanings of χάρις in the Graeco-Roman environment of Paul's day must be investigated, because this information will serve as the décor, the interpretative framework, for the investigation of Paul's soteriological understanding of grace.[1]

[1] This historical construct of χάρις is called for, because communication always functions within the parameters of a social system, with language as an important storehouse and communicative vehicle of the various, socially shared meanings. The ancient Graeco-Roman environment, within which Paul's texts were produced, infused the written signs in his letters with culturally-specific meanings and patterned them in socially appreciable ways for their intended readers. However, this does not imply that Paul's understanding of grace will be analysed exclusively in terms of socio-cultural factors, since his internalisation of God's grace and his own theological reflection on the Christ-event also informed and redefined the influences from his social environment.

2. An Overview of χάρις in the *Umwelt* of Paul

2.1. *Χάρις in the Graeco-Roman World*

Paul's language of χάρις was very much at home in the Eastern Mediterranean world of his day. Various forms of social interaction, which involved an exchange of services and gifts, was (also) verbalised in the language of χάρις (e.g., Sophokles, *Aj.* 522). These *euergetistic* interactions between groups or individuals usually inaugurated long-term relations and mutual obligations, as well as clearly defined differentiations of status and power. We could actually speak of a general norm of reciprocity in the Greco-Roman world based on the principle that people were socially obliged to reward those who provided services to them (Cicero, *Off.* 1.47).[2]

2.1.1. *Χάρις As a Verbal Reference to Divine Benefactions and Human Gratitude*

Χάρις was frequently used in contexts where "Glückfälle, Rettung oder Erfolg" were related to "die Gnade der Götter" (Zeller 1990, 14). Χάρις thus verbalises the proactive goodness of the gods to one another and to humans (cf. Homer, *Il.* 2.12; 6.235; 8.19; 17.63). Divine favour is usually experienced by humans in the form of concrete gifts or services. For example, in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (581), the latter states that the divine favour or χάρις of Zeus enabled the army to conquer Troy. However, Homer states that the gods do not give gracious gifts to all alike, neither form nor mind or eloquence. "Although somebody might be inferior in comeliness, God sets a crown of beauty upon his words. On the other hand, such a crown of χάρις ("favour") is often withheld from other people's eloquent words" (*Od.* 8.170–175). According to Stoic philosophers, God gives good gifts to people, not because he is moved by χάρις or ὀργή, but because of his own being from which all good stems (Seneca, *Ben.* IV.3.2).

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[2] One of the seven basic commands associated with the cult of Apollo at Delphi, clearly stated: χάριν ἀποδός ("return a gift"—*Syll. III* 1268 I, 14). Graeco-Roman reciprocity was determined mainly by benefactors' search for χάρις καὶ δόξα (Plutarch, *Them.* 3.2), not by their altruistic gestures of compassion for the poor. In turn, beneficiaries constantly strived to rid themselves of these reciprocal obligations by returning gifts of adequate value (= balanced reciprocity) or more value than the original gifts (= agonistic reciprocity), so as to place their benefactors in their debt once again (cf. Arrian, *Epict. diss.* II.9.12).

Χάρις also functions as a human plea to the gods to show χάρις or favour (e.g., Pindar, *Nem.* 10.30), and as an expression of gratitude on the part of the recipients of divine benevolence. For example, in Aeschylus' *Prometheus* (985), in a discussion between the main character and Hermes, Prometheus expresses his debt to Zeus as follows: καὶ μὴν ὀφείλω γ' ἄν τίνοιμ' αὐτῷ χάριν (cf. also Plato, *Leg.* 7.340a).[3] On the basis of prior human expressions of χάρις or gratitude to the gods, the latter are often beckoned to respond with further divine benefits (cf. Pindar, *Ol.* 1.75).

2.1.2. *Χάρις As a Verbal Reference to the Favourable Public Disposition towards Particular Individuals*

Given the fact that the ancient Graeco-Roman world was built on the foundational values of honour-shame (cf. Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 3.1.11; Quintillian, *Inst.* 3.8.1), any public recognition of the social worth of an individual, particularly persons of high social ranking, signalled a bestowal of, and the consequent gain in, public honour (cf. also Pitt-Rivers 1965; Williams 1993). For instance, in Homer's *Iliad 4.95*, Athena tells the son of Lycaon that if he would kill Menelaus, he would win χάρις ("favour") in the eyes of the Trojans (cf. also Pindar, *Ol.* 8.57, 8.80). Plutarch often uses χάρις in the same manner. In *Alcibiades*, the main character's "acquired honour" (that is, the favour bestowed on him in social interactions) is often the topic of discussion (e.g., 4.15.3; 26.4; 27.1; 30.5). Diodorus, on his part, disapprovingly speaks of the shameful behaviour of individuals who use questionable strategies to win the χάρις or goodwill of the masses (9.4.1).[4]

2.1.3. *Χάρις As a Verbal Reference to Euergetistic Interactions between Individuals and Groups*

The striving of Roman patrons and Greek benefactors for honour and the competition among clients and beneficiaries for material

[3] According to Homer (*Il.* 14.235) even the gods owe each other χάρις in return for benefits.

[4] Nearly four centuries earlier, Aristotle (*Ath. pol.* 35.3) had referred to the efforts of the council in Athens during the archonship of Pythodorus to punish individuals who misused their social positions to win public χάρις. However, in his *Ethica nicomachea* (1127b15), Aristotle is not too concerned when individuals exaggerate their own merits to gain public δόξα or χάρις. Such persons are not to be blamed in the same manner as those who boast to get money.

benefits was part and parcel of the ancient Mediterranean people's "social stock of knowledge" (cf. Seneca, *Ben.* I.4.2). It is therefore not unexpected that Aristotle also addresses the "ethics" of receiving and returning services (*Eth. nic.* 1167b20).[5] In his *Ethica nicomachea* (1133a1–5), he mentions that any failure on the part of individuals to repay good with good will let them feel as if they are in the position of slaves. He associates the shrines of the Χάριτες with reciprocity by stating that these shrines serve ἵν' ἀνταπόδοσις ᾖ τοῦτο γὰρ ἴδιον χάριτος ἀνθυπηρετῆσαι, καὶ πάλιν αὐτὸν ἄρξαι χαριζόμενον. (". . . to remind men to return a kindness; for that is a special characteristic of grace, since it is a duty not only to repay a service done one, but another time to take the initiative in doing a service oneself.") However, he also emphasizes the necessity of understanding any gift in terms of χάρις, that is, as a gift bestowed out of free will, and not merely as part of a reciprocal obligation (*Rhet.* 1385b).

In the works of Diodorus (who wrote his *Historical Libraries* between c. 60–30 BCE), the term χάρις functions mainly as a verbal reference to *euergetistic* interactions between people. Apart from expressing the gracious disposition of either the givers or recipients of benefits (e.g., 13.25.4), χάρις also points to a concrete service rendered to a beneficiary (such as the χάρις the Thebans requested from the Lacedaimonians, in return for which they waged a war against the Athenians, 11.81.2; cf. also 11.58.4; 13.92.6; 15.11.1). At the same time, χάρις denotes the correct response of gratitude from the recipients to a benefactor's εὐεργέσια (cf. 13.27.1; 14.9.7; 15.6.1). Well

[5] Zeller (1990, 19–20) overstresses the fact that an "Unterscheidung zwischen χάρις und Geschuldetem ist in der griechischen Ethik schon länger eingebürgert." Indeed, many ancient authors, from Pericles (*Thuk.* II, 40, 4) to Philo (*Cher.* 122), emphasise that the bestowal of gifts should not be given with a view to receive a return. The reason for this is that they believed that the principle of χάρις would then be nullified, and, according to Aristotle, so also the feelings and obligations of gratitude (*Rhet.* 1385a35–1385b3). However, these remarks should be understood as criticism against agonistic tendencies, which often went hand in hand with benefit exchange. Within a limited good environment such as the Graeco-Roman world, people had to reciprocate a benefit with a return gift of equal value to secure their good repute (cf. Pitt-Rivers 1965, 27; 1992, 233). However, many believed that it was disgraceful to be outdone by others in doing kindness, which, in turn, gave rise to the agonistic mentality mentioned above (e.g. Isocrates, *Demon.* 26). Perhaps this is why Aristotle (*Eth. nic.* 1167b20) tells us that those on the receiving end of benefits do not love their benefactors as much, since they know that they must reciprocate the loans they received.

aware of the principle of balanced reciprocity (e.g., 14.25.5), Diodorus often mentions the danger of ingratitude by recipients, such as the soldiers of the Campanians, who complained to the Carthaginians that, though they had been the ones chiefly responsible for the successes during one of Hannibal's campaigns, οὐκ ἀξίας δὲ χάριτας εἰληφόντες τῶν πεπραγμένων ("the rewards they had received were not a fair return for their accomplishments"; 13.62.5).

2.2. *Χάρις in Jewish circles*

Without repeating the findings of research on χάρις in the ancient Jewish world, it is clear that the Hebrew term חנ is the closest verbal equivalent to χάρις, "das in seiner Grundbedeutung objektiven 'Liebreiz' und subjektives 'Wohlgefallen' vereinigt" (Zeller 1990, 26). Israelites knew that Yahweh is full of goodness and mercy. The "grace-formula" of Israel, expressed in Exod 34:6–7 (Spieckermann 1990, 1ff), states that Yahweh is חנן ו רחמ.[6] In accordance with God's nature, he shows himself to be merciful within the arena of his creation of human life (Ps 27:13; cf. also Ps 145, where his goodness is linked with his mercy and steadfast love). Clearly, the grace of God is never isolated from life but forms the basis for what is good and gracious in it.[7]

Israelites knew Yahweh as their benefactor who set them apart as his holy people, and bestowed upon them the gifts of circumcision, the law, the temple and land. In response to these benefactions, as Josephus (*Ant.* 16.42A) suggests, the people of Israel owed him their undivided loyalty so as to bring public honour to his holy name. However, this did not imply that human expressions of gratitude placed God in their debt, because Josephus also knows that "it is not possible for men to return thanks to God by means of works (ἔργοις), for God stands in need of nothing and is above any such recompense" (*Ant.* 8.111).

In Philo of Alexandria's works, in which he links God's χάρις to his act of creation, θεοσέβεια is the response expected from the

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[6] The adjective nnh used here, indicates his "gnädige Zugehen auf einem Schwächeren, Bedrängteren, armeren, mitenhaltenen" (Zimmerli 1960, 377).

[7] More correctly, as Spieckermann (1990, 5) also shows, both the grace and the righteousness of God are stressed in texts such as the Pentateuch. But, as Hossfeld (1999, 21–22) observes: "unbestreitbar wird das ‹bergewicht der Gnade durchgehalten."

recipients of grace, which "verwirklicht sich aber als Dank, in dem man Gott—gemäss antiker Auffassung—das Empfangene anerkennend zurückgibt" (Zeller 1990, 116). Analogous examples abound in Jewish texts from the Hellenistic era, in which human gratitude to the proactive grace of God is frequently articulated. For instance, in Tobit 12:6–8, the archangel Raphael enjoins the public testimony to honour God as a fitting response to the blessings that Tobit received: "Bless God and acknowledge him in the presence of all the living for the good things he has done for you . . . With fitting honour declare to all the people the deeds of God" (quoted in deSilva 2000, 114).

Another pressing question within early Jewish circles was the relationship between God's righteousness and his grace on the day of eschatological judgment. However, as Avemarie (1999) has recently shown, it is not possible to speak simplistically about grace in the framework of Jewish eschatology/ies, since both principles of grace and retribution are present in their writings. This implies that both these principles remain in the balance in the final judgment because there is no fixed relationship between them. In the writings of Qumran, God's grace and human obedience to his commands, are also juxtaposed (e.g., 1QpHab 8:1–2). In 1QS 11:11–15, God's grace is demonstrated in the fact that he shows his righteousness by allowing sinners to draw close to him and by atoning their since through grace. At the same time, however, the Qumran community, in line with their exclusivistic soteriology, stressed that, since they possessed the true covenant of God, only those who were prepared to obey the rule of the Community were allowed into the covenant of grace, the dsj tyrb (1QS 1:7–8a).[8]

3. Exploring the Semantic Nuances of χάρις on the Surface Level of Paul's Texts

When we turn to Paul, it is clear that the term χάρις (only used in the singular in his letters) abounds in the apostle's epistolary con-

[8] On the level of interpersonal benefaction, the wisdom teacher, Yeshua ben Sira, expresses his disgust at the ungraceful benefactor who gives benefits in expectation of some profit (*Sir* 20:13–16). Therefore, he warns any would be benefactor to take heed to whom he shows kindness, so that gratitude will be shown to him for his good deeds (*Sir* 12:1).

versations with his churches, and also with different semantic nuances. Formally, as part of his epistolary style, Paul uses the term χάρις in the initial salutation and the prologue of his letters, expressing "die sich erbarmende Huld Gottes, die schon zum Heilsgut geworden ist" (Zeller 1990, 132). Also in the concluding benedictions of all his letters, χάρις functions "als die Christen beschützende und begleitende gegenwärtige Macht" (Zeller 1990, 133). Paul also relates the χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ to his own calling as apostle (1 Cor 15:10; Gal 1:15). He knows that in himself he is the ἐσχατος τῶν πάντων . . . (1 Cor 15:8), the ἐλάχιστος των ἀποστόλων . . . (1 Cor 15:9). However, the sovereign gift of God's grace changed him into God's official emissary in the world and now enables him to fulfil his calling, in spite of overwhelming hardships and suffering (2 Cor 12:9).

Paul not only associates χάρις with God, but also with Christ (e.g., Rom 16:20; 2 Cor 8:9; 13:13). Christ demonstrated his goodness or χάρις by giving up his heavenly wealth for the sake of the poor (2 Cor 8:9); that is, he became human for the sake of sinners. Only those who are called through God ἐν χάριτι χριστοῦ (Gal 1:6) experience this active working of goodness in their lives. Specifically, through their identification with Christ in his death and resurrection, they share "in the favour of grace which God bestowed upon Jesus by vindicating him and raising him from the dead" (Powers 2001, 193). However, God's grace is not only revealed in his past act of justifying the ungodly. Believers here and now continue to experience χάρις, that is, God's favour, because they are ὑπὸ χάριν (Rom 6:14–15), that is, they live their lives in the sphere of God's goodness and mercy, which has become a present "eschatological reality" through the death and resurrection of Christ. In Rom 5:2, Paul expresses the same idea when he states that believers "stand" (ἱστήμι) in God's grace to which they gained access through Christ. Once again, this thought is picked up in Rom 5:21 where Paul emphasizes that believers, in the ongoing work of divine sanctification in their lives, no longer live under the reign of ἁμαρτία, but under the rule of χάρις, which leads to eternal life (cf. also section 4.3). Thus, "die Rechfertigungsgnade ist *gratia continua* aus der Dynamik der eschatologischen Vollendung: sie entfaltet ihre Gesitekraft nich nur im Prozess der Bekehrung, sondern auch im Modus der Bewahrung und Bewährung, also im Glauben, wie Paulus ihn umfassend verstanden hat" (Söding 2001, 37). This active favour of God in the church is also seen in his "personal endowments of grace" (= χαρίσματα) in the lives of individual believers (Rom 12:6).

God's benefactions always call for a fitting human response. According to Paul, the only appropriate reply is one of overwhelming gratefulness, which first and foremost should be translated into verbal expressions of thanksgiving, χάρις τῷ θεῷ (1 Cor 15:57; 2 Cor 9:14–15). However, human χάρις or gratitude in response to the favour of God should also become visible in their behaviour. A concrete example of this outworking of divine grace in the lives of believers is seen in the exemplary conduct of the Macedonian believers (2 Cor 8:1–4). Despite their own extreme poverty, God's grace, which was given to them (8:1), enabled them to contribute abundantly to Paul's collection for the poor in Jerusalem (cf. Joubert 2000).

"Gospel" and "grace" are frequently used in the same literary contexts in Paul's letters, "strongly implying that the only salvific channel of divine grace is the pure "truth of the gospel"—Gal 2:5, 14" (Luter 1998). Thus, χάρις and εὐαγγελίον, without being synonyms, are often used interchangeably (cf. 2 Cor 4:15). Any failing on the part of humans to appreciate the grace of God, by altering this εὐαγγελίον (2 Cor 11:4; Gal 1:6), or by living ἐν σαρκὶ (Gal 5:16–21) or ὑπὸ νόμον (Gal 4:8–11), could lead to separation from Christ, which implies nothing less than falling away from grace (cf. Gal 5:4 where Paul warns the Galatians: τῆς χάριτος ἐχεπέσατε).

4. The Basic Soteriological Building Blocks of Paul's Theology

Although this foregoing descriptive overview of the various semantic nuances of χάρις in Paul's letters presents us with a basic interpretative framework, it is still too preliminary (and perhaps too general) to be of much help. In order to construct a more coherent, explicatory picture of Paul's perspectives on χάρις, the basic "soteriological building blocks" of his thought system need to be identified (section 3) and analysed in relation to his intratextual application of the language of χάρις (section 4–5). On the surface structure, Paul's language reveals important traces of what he considered to be the basic components of his symbolic universe. By taking cognisance of some of these references related to his own background as a Pharisee, the Christ-event and the role of the law and sin, we will, hopefully, be able to understand more fully why Paul applied the language of χάρις in his reflection on the event of salvation.

4.1. *Paul the Righteous Israelite*

As the son of Jewish parents, Paul knew the traditions of Israel by heart. After spending his early childhood years in Tarsus, he later went to Jerusalem where he received his training in law at the feet of Gamaliel I (cf. Hengel 1991, 34ff). Here he soon excelled over his contemporaries in his relentless search for the δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ[9] through strict obedience to the ἔργα νόμου (Gal 2:16; 3:10; Rom 3:20, 28), that is, the Jewish religious system.[10] The pre-Christian Paul lived "in the sphere of the law" (ἐν νομῷ—Rom 3:12) because he knew that he would eventually be judged according to his obedience to the commandments of the law.[11] On the day of ὀργῆς καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ θεοῦ (Rom 2:5), all his works would be scrutinized, just like everybody else's (Rom 2:7). Paul knew that God is merciful and patient. But he also knew that God is the righteous judge who, on the last day, would reveal his righteousness when

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[9] Ziesler (1972) has shown that δικαιοώ is used both forensically and relationally in Paul's letters. Furthermore, he has demonstrated that the noun δικαιοσύνη as well as the adjective δίκαιος also carry ethical meanings. Therefore, we should take seriously the fact that Paul joins both ethical and forensic categories in his understanding of δικαοσύνη, with both these categories always supposing the other. Bultmann's well-known thesis that δικαοσύνη is the "Gabe Gottes and dem Gerechtfertigten" (1984, 284–285), or Käsemann's view that it is the "macht Gottes" (1964, 181–93), although still useful, have therefore become dated in view of recent research of this nature on Pauline soteriology (e.g., Breytenbach 1989; Hübner 1993; Dunn 1998; Söding 1999).

[10] Without becoming entangled in the debate between adherents of the so-called new perspective on Paul who, from the perspective of "covenantal nomism", relate these references to the "works of the law" only to circumcision, Sabbath observation and dietary laws (e.g., Sanders 1977; Dunn 1990; Wright 1997), and their critics, who interpret these texts in terms of the final judgment (e.g., Seifrid 1992; Stuhlmacher 2001; Kim 2002), it seems as if Paul is here concerned with more than merely the purity regulations and religious calendars of the Jews. When the larger literary contexts of Rom 2 and Gal 3 are taken into consideration, ἔργα clearly refer to all the right deeds required by the law as religious system, not just to particular rituals and laws that functioned as border markers of Jewish identity. The issue for Paul here is apparently not just about getting non-Jews, who do not keep these Jewish purity laws into the fold, but about obedience by one and all to the whole law *per se*. For Paul the ποιηταὶ νόμου (Rom 2:13), who obey the heart of the law by doing τὸ ἀγαθόν (Rom 2:8, 10), are, therefore, the same group as those who keep the ἔργα νόμου.

[11] Perhaps Paul the Pharisee even undertook missionary journeys in his efforts to convince non-Jews to be circumcised and accept a new way of life under the law. This much could be inferred from his remark in Gal 5:11: εἰ περιτομὴν ἔτι κηρύσσω. . . . This verse stresses that he previously adhered to and communicated a different message regarding circumcision.

he judges everybody according to the "objective criteria" stipulated in his written law (Rom 2:4–5; Gal 3:10). However, Paul was not too concerned about his own eternal fate. He was convinced that he would be raised from the dead in glory, because he was ἄμεμπτος according to the δικαιοσύνη required by the law (Phil 3:6).

4.2. *Paul the Convert*

The event on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 9; 22; 26), where Paul saw the face of Christ in a divine revelation (2 Cor 4:6; cf. also 1 Cor 9:1; 15:8), completely altered the direction of his life. His present cosmology, which was the result of a process of internalisation of and reflection on a complex network of knowledge over many years, proved to be irreconcilable with the new knowledge now given to him δι᾽ ἀποκαλύψεω Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ (Gal 1:12). From this moment on, the basic religious axioms of his previous life-world was challenged and, consequently, also adapted and altered (cf. also Seifrid 1992:137ff). As a result of this revelatory experience, the content of Paul's symbolic knowledge and his language system was also transformed (Phil 3:10–11).

The basic building block of Paul's new symbolic world, which turned him into a καινὴ κτίσις, was his salvific knowledge concerning the death and resurrection of Christ (2 Cor 5:17). The very same Jesus, whom he previously knew κατὰ σάρκα (2 Cor 5:16) and whose followers he persecuted for spreading blasphemy, now became the centre of his existence. Paul's new knowledge of *history* (namely that God raised Jesus from the dead) and the *symbolic universe* (namely that Jesus is now the heavenly *Kyrios*, the mighty son of God through the Holy Spirit Phil 2:11; Rom 1:3), was interpreted by him as nothing less than a sovereign act of God's χάρις, *a creatio ex nihilo*, a second Genesis (2 Cor 4:6). In other words, Paul knew that it was only through God's own goodness, *extra nos*, and not out of himself that he received this new knowledge, as well as the apostolic calling to preach this message to the nations (Gal 1:16). This is also expressed in 1 Cor 15:10: χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ εἰμι ὅ εἰμι. From now on Paul's self-understanding was based on the fact that "nichts ist er aus sich selbst, allein die Barmherzigkeit Gottes hat ihn uaf den Weg zum Leben gestellt" (Lohse 1996, 63).

4.3. *No Righteousness before God through Obedience to the Law*

Paul's "emigration" to a new universe of discourse did not entail the acceptance of a completely new religion. It rather implied a redefinition of his existing knowledge of the "symbolic objects of salvation" in the religion of Israel (such as God, the Messiah, the law). In other words, the nature and content of Paul's religious knowledge was radically adjusted in view of his new understanding of God's involvement in the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, the soteriological and ethical inadequacy of the law, as the safe haven of those who sought to obtain God's righteousness through obedience to its commands, was unmasked once and for all in the Christ event. Paul realized (Kertelge 1999:72):

> der Mensch erlangt das Heil nicht aufgrund von Gesetztreue, die ja nach jüdischem Verständnis durchaus grundlegend ist für ein heilvolles Leben im Bund mit Gott und im Verbund des Gottesvolkes. Grundliegend für die Heilsgemeinschaft mit Gott und im Gottesvolk ist nicht das Tun des Menschen, sondern das Handeln Gottes.

God's instalment of Christ as ἱλαστήριον (Rom 3:25) proved the law to be a hopelessly ineffective tool for accomplishing justification in his sight. As a matter of fact, the δικαιοσύνη that God bestows as a free gift of χάρις (Rom 3:24), takes place completely outside the framework of the law (χωρὶς νόμου—Rom 3:21). Only through faith in Christ, "who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification" (Rom 4:25) can believers now be at peace with God (Rom 5:1; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21; cf. also Stuhlmacher [2001, 56]).

4.4. *Sin and the judgment of God Is Overcome in Christ*

The reason for the ineffectiveness of the law is simple: ἁμαρτία.[12] According to Paul, sin struck its claws into the law and brought death to those who strived to attain life through obedience to its commands (Rom 7:7–12). Therefore, the law, although being ἅγιος

[12] For Paul, sin is "einerseits Unheilsmacht, die vonn Adam an alle Menschen, die nicht zum Glauben gefunden haben, in ihren Bann schlägt (Rom 5, 12–21), andererseits persönliches Fehlverhalten, das letzlich auf die Missachtung des Gottseins Gottes und die Rechte des Nächsten zurückzuführen ist (Rom 1, 18)" (Söding 2001, 34).

as a gift from God (Rom 7:12), ended up as the law τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτοῦ (Rom 8:2). The result of this destructive work of sin, from the time of Adam's transgression (Rom 5:12–21), was that people, Jews and non-Jews alike, were negatively labelled in the sight of God as "weak" (Rom 5:6), "ungodly" (Rom 5:6), "unrighteous" (implied in Rom 5:7); "sinners" (Rom 5:8) and "enemies of God" (Rom 5:10). All whose "soteriological status" was defined in this fashion, now had to face the wrath of God in the coming judgment (Rom 5:9).

Fortunately, the power of sin was dealt a severe blow by God when he sent his son ἐν ὁμοίωματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας (Rom 8:4), that is "Jesus kam, dem Sündenfleisch gleichgestaltet und der Sünde passiv ausgeliefert, sich ihr anders als wir aber nicht aktiv öffnend" (Käsemann 1980, 209). In Rom 8:3–4, with its uneven grammatical construction, which points to the fact "dass Paulus . . . auf geprägtes Verkündigungsgusgut zurückgreift" (Käsemann 1980, 208),[13] the apostle shows that sin not only neutralized the effectiveness of the law to accomplish righteousness before God; it also weakened human flesh and turned it into a vehicle of sin. Put differently, ἁμαρτία took both the law and people captive and used σάρξ[14] "über den Menschen Macht zu gewinnen, indem sie ihn dazu verführt, auf das 'Fleisch' zu vertrauen, von ihm das Leben zu erwarten" (Barth 1992, 110). But God intervened through the "justifying blood of Christ" (cf. also Rom 5:9). Specifically, when Jesus took on the form of σάρξ on the cross, God responded by condemning ἁμαρτία in its most visible form, namely, in the σάρξ of Jesus (Rom 8:4). Therefore, because of God's judgement of sin in this manner, believers, due to their solidarity with Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ), now have the assurance that there is no κατάκριμα, no divine condemnation, for them (Rom 8:1).

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[13] Here Paul makes use of a so-called "Senderformel": "God sent his only Son . . ." (cf. also Gal 4:4; Joh 3:16; 1 Joh 4:9). Barth (1992, 109) correctly points out that Käsemann's reference to Paul's use of traditional material in Rom 8:3–4 does not suffienctly explain the uneven grammatical construction and the anakolython in these verses. According to him: "der Beginn des Satzes: 'Was dem Gesetz unmöglich war' lässt als Fortsetzung erwarten: 'das tat Gott' oder: 'das vollbrachte Gott.' Diese wohl ursprünglich beabsichtigte Aussage fiel aus, als Paulus zu zeigen suchte, wie Gott das tat. Dazu griff Paulus die Senderformel auf, um über die Sendung des Sohnes zu dessen Tod hinzuführen."

[14] Here in Rom 8:1–4, Paul uses σάρχ four times in the sense of the perishable, earthly existence of humans encapsulated by sin, which renders them completely insufficient to live righteous in the sight of God.

Since Christ died on behalf of all believers as their representative (Powers 2001, 105), and since God vindicated Jesus by raising him from the dead, Paul is of the opinion that believers, on the basis of this corporate unity with Christ, fully share in God's grace, justification, peace, forgiveness, the Spirit and the resurrection life of Christ. In other words, Christ participated in the most severe forms of human alienation from God, by becoming a curse ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν (Gal 3:13); sin ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν (2 Cor 5:20)[15] and dying ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν (Rom 5:8; 1 Thess 5:10), which, resulted in believers becoming δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ (2 Cor 5:21). This participation of believers in the life of Christ, both in his earthly fate and in his exalted heavenly position, is so strong that in 2 Cor 5:17 and 21, Paul describes this unity as being ἐν Χριστῷ.

For Paul, God's eschatological righteousness is now also a present reality. By declaring sinners who put their trust in Christ righteous, God himself has actually restored "die endzeitliche Gemeinschaft mit den Menschen" (Gaukesbrink 1999, 218). Although the final judgment still awaits all in the near future (2 Cor 5:10), Paul, in a *qual wachomer* argument in Rom 5:9, stresses that believers need not fear this day of eschatological reckoning, since they already partake in God's justification here and now (δικαιωθέντες νῦν). Therefore, if this first part of Paul's argument holds true, namely that sinners are now justified through the sacrificial death of Jesus (ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ), then the second part is equally true, namely that they will be saved by him from God's ὀργῆ.

4.5. *Summary: The Basic Building Blocks of Paul's Convictional World*

On the deep structure of Paul's thought in his letters, a basic "metanarrative" is operative that constantly informs and guides his contingent theological reflections.[16] This new narrative concerning God's

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[15] Especially problematic is the expression: ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν αμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν. Without getting entangled in the debate regarding the precise meaning of "hamartia" in this context, it does not seem as if Paul uses it in a cultic sense as a sin offering, as, e.g., Dunn (1998) and Stuhlmacher (2001:56) suggest (cf. the criticism against this view in Breytenbach 1989, 203), but rather as a reference to "die gänze, umfassende Realität der Sünde" (Gaukesbrink 1999, 217).

[16] In this regard, Beker (1980) distinguishes between a basic coherent core in Paul's theology and contingent applications thereof by him, within different situations within his churches.

involvement in the lives of sinners through Christ, which replaced his previous knowledge regarding God's involvement in the process of salvation, and which was packed in various rhetorical wrappings and argumentative moulds throughout his letters, could be summarized as follows:

PREVIOUS LIFE-WORLD
a. Aim: Attainment of righteousness before God in the coming judgment.
b. How? Obedience to the law.

IDEOLOGICAL TURNING POINT
a. The existential crisis, which rendered as ineffective, the norms, vaues, meanings and ideologies encoded in the symbols, rituals, language system, roles, functions and socio-religious institutions that promised access to divine benefactions: God's revelation of his son, Jesus Christ.
b. Invalidation of the axioms of the previous symbolic universe: the law is powerless to mediate righteousness before God.
c. Reason: The destructive force of sin is more powerful than the law.
d. Result: Both the law and those who try to keep it are in the grip of sin and death. All have to face the judgment of God on the final day.

NEW LIFE
a. Basis: God intervenes decisively in the course of human affairs.
b. Aim: the justification of sinners.
c. Mode: the death and resurrection of God's son, Jesus.
d. Manner in which salvation is mediated: Faith in Jesus Christ.
e. Result: Believers receive righteousness from God through participation in the life, death and resurrection of Christ.

5. Paul's Theological Reflection on Salvation in the Language of χάρις

In his letters, Paul reflects on the Christ-event from various theological angles of incidence, as required by the contingent situations that he addresses. He also applies various traditions and concepts from his *Umwelt,* as well as traditional Jewish and early Christian material, to give expression to the nature and content of the new life in Christ.[17] One such concept that he frequently applies in his

[17] Many researchers interest themselves in the question on how socio-religious

explication of the Christ-event is χάρις. Religious interaction between humans and God/the gods and the system of *euergetism* were frequently framed in the terminology of χάρις in the Mediterranean world in Paul's day. Since there was "a high level of exposure among all the Christians to public benefaction and public responses of gratitude . . ." (deSilva 2000, 122), χάρις, with its strong reciprocal undertones, provided an ideal vehicle for Paul to verbalise God's benefactions in Christ. However, this does not imply, *contra* Betz (1985, 42), that the χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ should be reduced to a singular "Gnadentheologie des Paulus" (Zeller 1990, 138; cf. also section 2).

5.1. *Χάρις As Verbal Reference to God's Active Goodness in the Death and Resurrection of Christ*

In Rom 1:18–31, Paul presents God as the gracious benefactor who, in his act of creation, revealed his power and divine nature to the world (Rom 1:20). However, people responded in the worst possible manner by refusing to honour him or to show gratitude (v. 21: οὐχ ὡς θεὸν ἐδόξασαν ἢ ηὐχαρίστησαν). Of course, to treat any deity in such a disrespectful manner is a grave insult (cf. Aeschiles, *Ag.* 581). Divine benefits must always be acknowledged by way of human gratitude (Aeschiles, *Ag.* 821; *Suppl.* 980). Any pious Jew, from the wisdom teacher (Prov 3:1–8), to Philo (*Plant.* 126–131), to members of the Qumran community (cf. 1QS 11:12; 16:2–3), knew that verbal gratitude, accompanied by the correct moral behaviour, was the only fitting response to Yahweh's benefactions. However, according to Paul, both Israelites and non-Israelites failed in this regard. As a result, God handed them over to themselves and to the power of sin (Rom 1:24, 26, 28).

In Romans 3:21–31, Paul records a second epoch in God's involvement in the world. This epoch, as *the decisive event of God's χάρις in*

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traditions and concepts from the Old Testament, the Graeco-Roman environment and early, pre-Pauline, Christianity, have directly and indirectly informed Paul's theology (cf. overviews in Barth 1992; Gaukesbrink 1999; Powers 2001). However, this does not imply that scholars are unanimous in their evaluation of these religionsgeschichtliche influences on Paul's thought, as is illustrated, for instance, in the debate between Stuhlmacher (1991) and Breytenbach (1989; 1993) regarding the centrality of atonement in Paul's thought and the impact of traditional Jewish and early-Christian views of atonement on his theology.

history, deals with the revelation of the new δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ in Christ that takes place outside the parameters of obedience to the law (χωρὶς νόμου—3:21). Even more astonishing is the fact that God's sovereign grace entails the giving of Jesus Christ as an ἱλαστήριον (v. 25) to all who have sinned and who have failed to bring glory to him (v. 23). This righteousness is not merely a theoretical proposal, but the concretisation of God's gift of grace (cf. Paul's emphasis on the beneficial nature of this righteousness in v. 24 through his using both δωρεά and χάρις). Specifically, the χάρις of God is the power that is revealed in his act of declaring people righteous (as indicated by the verb δικαιοῦσθαι in v. 24). In other words, the direct result of the bestowal of the gift of God is that it affects a change in people's status from being sinners to being righteous before him.

God's gift of salvation to his enemies is nothing less than a revelation of his own nature as a God of mercy and love. Of course, this does not imply that grace is a previously undisclosed characteristic of God's being. Rather, in and through the Christ-event, the concept χάρις verbalises the "wholly generous *act* of God" (Dunn 1990, 202). "Am Tod Christi für die Sünder, die Gottlosen, wird Gottes Liebe zu den Menschen erkennbar. Sie is nicht anderes als sein Erbarmen, das eine 'creatio ex nihilo' bewirkt" (Gaukesbrink 1999, 127). To give one's life for the righteous is scarcely imaginable in Paul's *Umwelt*. But God reveals his gracious love by giving his Son for ἁμαρτωλοί (Rom 5:7–8). The deaths of some Jewish martyrs were understood to be beneficial for the entire Jewish people (e.g., 2 Macc 7; *A. Mos.* 9–10). And, yes, in the Greek world, we have ample examples of individuals sacrificing their lives on behalf of their cities or their country (e.g., Plutarch, *Pel.* 21; cf. also Barth 1992:59ff; Powers 2001, 193ff). But these beneficial deaths by human benefactors were never undertaken for the sake of their enemies, the unrighteous or sinners (cf. Rom 5:6–10). As a matter of fact, strong warnings against the bestowal of benefits on ungrateful people abound in ancient documents (e.g., Seneca, *Ben.* IV.8.2). Pseudo-Phocylides even writes: "do no good to a bad man; it is like sowing into the sea" (quoted in deSilva 2000, 150, n. 59). God's gift of his son to justify sinners is thus "ohne jegliche Analogie" (Schlier, in Gaukesbrink 1999, 127).[18]

[18] The reference in the (Greek) *T. Benj.* 3:8 to the death of the one without sin

Χάρις, God's goodness, should not be understood merely as a form of divine amnesty to sinners. Indeed, God is the righteous God who demands obedience to his commands. But, in bestowing righteousness, he is more than a "gracious judge" (*contra* Bultmann 1984, 284ff). Χάρις is actually "God acting in accordance with his own character and being" (Fisher, in Luter 1998). According to Jüngel (1999:64):

> Gott ist gerecht, indem er Gnade übt. Gnade und Gerechtigkeit sind für Gott gerade nicht derart zweierlei, dass Gnade vor Recht erginge. Vielmehr setzt Gott, gerade indem er Gnade übt, sein Recht durch. Als gnädiger Gott . . . entspricht Gott sich selbst, ist er sich selber treu, ist er in sich richtig, und verhält er sich seinem Geschöpf gegenüber richtig. Gerade der Glaube an Gottes Gnade ist also "stahlhart auf Gottes Gerechtigkeit gerichtet." Denn Gott ist "in seiner Gnade im Recht"—das ist der Sinn der Einheit von Gerechtsein Gottes und Gerechtmachen des Sünders im Begriff der Gerechtigkeit Gottes.

5.2. *Faith As the Channel along Which God's* χάρις *Is Mediated and Realised*

God's eschatological gift of δικαιοσύνη in Christ is appropriated only through faith (διὰ πίστεως, Gal 2:21; Rom 3:24; 4:4–5, 16). Any effort to attain salvation through one's own efforts leads to an annulment of his gift of grace (Gal 2: 21). However, faith is no human counter achievement. This is clear from Paul's narration of Abraham's access to God's δικαιοσύνη χωρὶς ἔργων in Rom 4. Because of Abraham's trust in God, and not on his own achievements (vv. 1–3), Paul, in his comment on this exemplary behaviour (vv. 4–5), distils a "general truth": To all who put their trust in the God who "justifies the ungodly", their faith does not function as an own accomplishment, but as a μισθός λογίζεται κατὰ χάριν.[19] In this regard, Abraham functions as the ideal prototype "der eschatologischen Offenbarung und universellen Geltung göttlicher Rechtfertigung *sola gratia per fidem* in Jesus Christus" (Sänger 1994, 120).

Faith is the channel along which God's salvation is mediated. Put differently, faith is the anthropological realization of God's χάρις. It

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υπὲρ ἀσεβῶν is not pre-Christian. It could even reflect a Christian adaptation of the original text.

[19] This adaptation of v. 4 is in line with the intention of Paul on the performative level of the text!

is always an existential-ontological act of the recipients of God's grace. But even this human response is incorporated in God's sovereign gift, his χάρις, to sinners, as is implied in Paul's statement that faith excludes all forms of boasting (Rom 3:27–31). However, without a concrete human response, *charis* remains just a theoretical possibility, albeit with dire consequences for those who reject it, as Paul implies in his paraenetic call to the Corinthians: μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ δέξασθαι ὑμᾶς (2 Cor 6:1).

5.3. *Χάρις As process: In the Sphere of the New Life in Christ and the Spirit*

The new life in Christ is the result of God's goodness and overwhelming generosity; it is God's χάρις *per se*. Earlier believers were "under sin", "under the law" and "in the flesh", that is, they found themselves trapped in the sphere where these destructive powers reign. As a result of their corresponding status (as sinners, ungodly), death and condemnation awaited them. But, then God's eschatological gift in Christ set them free and has placed them in a new sphere where sin no longer has the final say. Believers, through their baptism "into Christ Jesus" (Rom 6:3), now find themselves "in Christ" and "in the Spirit" (Rom 8:9). In this new realm, salvation is a present reality. Therefore, Paul can refer to this realm simply as χάρις (Rom 5:2), or as an existence "in the sphere of God's goodness" (ὑπὸ χάριν—Rom 6:14–15).[20] In this new existence, God's *charis* (as an active process) is continually at work, sanctifying his church through the work of his Spirit, as the eschatological gift to all believers.[21] In the words of Söding (2001, 35):

> Die schöpferische Kraft der Gnade Gottes zeitigt sich in einem radikalen Statuswechsel: Aus Sklaven, die sich selbst unter die Herrschaft der Sünde gebeugt haben, werden Söhne, die in der Freiheit des Geistes leben können (Gal 4, 5; Röm 8, 15.23); aus Feinden Gottes werden

[20] According to Paul, God here also makes himself known as the χρηστότης θεοῦ, the God from whom all kindness flows (Rom 11:22). Χρηστότης is frequently used in inscriptions to designate the nature of benefactors (cf. Danker 1982, 325ff). However, in order not to be cut off from God's *gratia continua*, believers must remain in his kindness by obedience to his commands (Rom 11:22).

[21] Dunn (1990, 203) correctly points out that in some cases it seems as if Paul uses χάρις as a correlative of God's Spirit (e.g., Rom 6:14).

> Versöhnte, denen "die liebe Gottes durch den Geist in die Herzen ausgegossen worden ist (Röm 5, 5); aus Sündern werden Gerechte, die ihre Glieder als Waffen der Gerechtigkeit Gottes zur Verfügung stellen" (6, 13).

In Rom 5:15–21, where Paul's contrasts Christ and Adam as representatives of two different spheres (5:12–21), he illustrates the radical impact of the grace of God on believers, both on the rhetorical level of the text, and in terms of its content.[22] In the old Adamitic regime where sin reigns, condemnation and death await all. But the new sphere, inaugurated by Christ, is characterized by an abundance of the sovereign favour of God and Christ (cf. also Theobald 1982; Zeller 1990, 157). This overflowing grace neutralizes the destructive effects of the Adamitic sphere in the lives of believers by replacing the κατάκριμα they had to face with δικαίωμα (v. 16), and the reign of θάνατος with a surplus of God's favour, the gift of δικαιοσύνη, as well as new life under the reign of Christ (v. 17). The status of ex-Adamites is also changed from ἁμαρτωλοί to δίκαιοι (v. 19). Even when the law came to the assistance of the reign of Adam to increase people's trespasses, *God's goodness* (χάρις) exceeded it (ὑπερπερισσεύειν, v. 20). Thus, while the old life, described in v. 21 as θάνατος, stands under the rule of sin, the new life, based on δικαιοσύνη, is ruled by the active power of God's goodness or χάρις (v. 21). At the same time, this new sphere of χάρις promises eternal life to all believers on the basis of the salvific work of Jesus, who is Lord over all the inhabitants of God's sphere of grace.

5.4. *Χάρις As Gratitude for God's Benefactions*

Paul knows that God, as the supreme benefactor, stands above the reciprocal system of benefaction (Rom 11:33–37). He permanently places all recipients of his benefactions in his debt. However, all of

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[22] See Paul's explicit wordplay with various terms from the same semantic field related to God's benefaction, e.g., χάρισμα (vv. 15, 16), χάρις (vv. 15, twice in 16 and 17, 20, 21), δωρεά (vv. 15, 17), δώρημα (v. 16) and περίσσευειν (vv. 15, 20). Περισσεία in v. 17 is cleverly contrasted against another set of concepts, related to the trespassing of God's commands and to punishment, e.g., θάνατος (vv. 17, 21), ἀποθνήσκειν (v. 15), πλεόναζειν (twice in v. 20), παράπτωμα (twice in v. 15, also in vv. 16, 17, 18, 20), ἁμαρτάνειν in v. 16, and ἁμαρτία (v. 20), κρίμα (v. 16) and κατάκριμα (v. 16). The verb βασιλεύειν (twice in v. 17, and twice in v 21) is used to denote the specific nature of both spheres.

them now enjoy exactly the same standing before God, namely as recipients of the favour of the Gracious One, but without a claim on God's return of favour (deSilva 2000, 127). People cannot, by "returning" a χάρις, make God their debtor. However, they are obligated to respond to God's grace.[23] First and foremost, gratitude for divine benevolence should be expressed in prayers of thanksgiving (cf. 1 Thess 5:18: ἐν παντὶ εὐχαριστεῖτε). At the same time, gratitude for God's unmerited favours should also be expressed publicly, in the presence of others, as well as by doing everything εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ (1 Cor 10:31).[24] In this regard, Paul serves as a role model for his churches. His "public expressions of gratitude" to God for his benefactions in the lives of believers, is a standard theme in the *capitatio benevolentiae* at the beginning of his letters. However, Paul's prayers of thanksgiving are not just formal literary devices. They are sincere expressions of praise by the apostle and broker of God's benefactions (cf. Joubert 2000; deSilva 2000, 133ff) for the outpouring of his abundant goodness in the lives of believers.

An important function of expressing gratitude for God's favour is that it contributes to the enhancement of his honour in public. Therefore, Paul assures the Corinthians that their prayers for him will lead to an increase in the prayers of thanksgiving by those who are still to benefit from his apostolic χάρισμα (2 Cor 1:11). A quantitative increase of the δόξα of God is also supposed in 2 Corinthians 4:15, where Paul's proclamation of the gospel (= χάρις) leads to an increase in the number of believers, whose prayers, in turn, overflow in gratitude towards God (cf. Theobald 1982, 222ff; Betz 1985, 118f).

6. Χάρις As a 'Speech Act'

Paul's new symbolic world is built on the knowledge that:

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[23] The psalmist, who in Psalm 116:12 asks: "What shall I give back to the Lord for all his gifts to me?" finds the answer to his question "by enumerating the public testimonies he will give to God's fidelity and favour" (deSilva 2000, 114).

[24] Gratitude towards benefactors should be voiced in exuberant praise and thanksgiving, as indicated in Aeschiles' *Suppl.* 980. Seneca (*Ben.* II.2.21) also admonishes beneficiaries to show their gratitude for favours through the "pouring forth" of their feelings. This should not be done only in the presence of the benefactor, but everywhere.

- Nobody is righteous before God.
- God gave Jesus up to death in order to bring salvation to sinners.[25]
- People are justified only through faith in Jesus Christ.
- Faith is not a human achievement that merits divine reward.

As we have seen, Paul also expresses this event/process of salvation in the language of benefaction. On the basis of the "common sense knowledge" regarding *euergetism* within the orbit of the urban centres of the Roman world (as the focal points of the apostle's missionary endeavours), Paul's original audiences would have associated these references to χάρις in his letters right away with divine favour, which, in turn, laid them under obligation to respond with fitting expressions of gratitude. Linking on to this knowledge, Paul articulates the basic framework of his soteriology by emphasizing that:

- God's χάρις has a specific content, namely the giving of Jesus as a sacrifice for the sins of all, Jews and non-Jews ("grace as event").
- God's χάρις has a specific ontological effect in the symbolic world, namely the radical transformation of the recipients' religious status before God.
- God's χάρις also includes the gift of his Spirit to believers, as well as their transference into the sphere of his *gratia continua* ("grace as process").
- God's χάρις places the recipients in permanent debt to him. They must continually express their gratitude in thanksgiving and deeds of obedience.

On the communicative level of Paul's texts, he "wants to do things with his words". He wants to move his readers from one position to another by means of the persuasive structure and content of his language. Clearly, certain members of his churches, on ideological grounds, did not agree with all his views, while others did not fully understand or correctly internalise his teaching. Therefore his letters, as a form of apostolic *parousia*, serve as powerful tools to rectify misgivings; eradicate misunderstandings, vilify erroneous views and, hopefully, effect the necessary changes in the heads and hearts

[25] Lohse (1996, 168) puts it as follows: "Nicht Menschen sind daher Subjekt der Versöhnung, sondern allein Gott, der die Initiative ergriffen und seine Sohn in diese Welt gesand hat."

of his readers that Paul hopes for. His theology, as explicated in his letters, is definitely not intended as a rational thought system that can be clinically dissected and objectively reflected on without any existential effect in the lives of those engaged in such ventures. Rather, the apostle's aim, in terms of the performative function of his language is to bring about concrete changes in the lives of his readers with regard to their correct understanding and continued experience of God's salvation.

Paul facilitates his readers' comprehension of the event/process of salvation by talking about it in analogical language; in language that could assist effectively in the process of internalisation (and, if need be, religious resocialisation) of God's χάρις in the lives of his original audiences. In this regard, however, our basic point of departure that Paul often talks about salvation in images of benefaction, well-known to his readers, should be adapted somewhat, because the apostle, at the same time, also *modifies and broadens* their existing knowledge of benefaction in order to accomplish his performative goals. This he does in the following manner:

a) Paul holds God up as the divine benefactor *par excellence*, an image not unfamiliar to Jewish believers, who knew that Yahweh is the only God, and to non-Jewish believers, many of whom understood Zeus as the divine *pater patriae*. However, Paul's unique proclamation of God's χάρις in Christ distinguishes his gospel of grace from all other beneficial systems. The favour of God, by sacrificing his son for all, is held up by him as the decisive event in the world history, which completely and permanently alters the status in the symbolic world of all who put their trust in Christ. On the performative level of Paul's texts, this knowledge communicates the exclusive nature of his gospel of salvation. At the same time, it makes an existential claim on the readers to fully align them with this unique gift of divine grace (Rom 10:5–13; 2 Cor 5:20; Phil 2:5–11).
b) In stark contrast to normal *euergetistic* relationships, Paul presents God's χάρις as benefitting his enemies, sinners and people of low social status (e.g., 1 Cor 1:26–30). God's generous and merciful nature is thus revealed most clearly when he, in spite of consistent ingratitude to his χάρις, freely bestows his eschatological favour on the world through Christ. This "strange grace" is now available to Jew and non-Jew, free and slave, male and female (Gal

3:28). On the performative level, this knowledge communicates the fact that the grace of God relativises all previous markers of status in Mediterranean society and allows equal access for all to God's favour.

c) God's χάρις turns salvation into a present reality. Contrary to normal *euergetistic* relationships, Paul makes it clear that God's favour is a given, unvarying fact, irrespective of the behaviour of his beneficiaries. Believers are now ἐν χάριτι, that is, they find themselves in the sphere of God's grace. Through the death and resurrection of Christ, they experience justification and eagerly await the day of the Lord (2 Cor 4:16–5:10; 1 Thess 4:13–18). On the performative level of Paul's texts, this knowledge offers comfort since the coming judgment of God is not to be feared any longer by those who place their trust in Christ.

d) God's χάρις calls for fitting, gracious responses. However, contrary to many religious interactions between humans and deities in the *Umwelt*, these responses cannot be offered to gain favour from God, or to coerce him to respond with new benefactions. On the performative level of Paul's texts, this knowledge underscores the fact that attachment to God, as divine benefactor, is a "costly" undertaking, since it requires personal sacrifices and absolute loyalty to him under all circumstances, as Paul's own life of hardship and sacrifice illustrates (2 Cor 6:3–10; Phil 3:7–11). It implies constant obedience and the honouring of God's name, as well as the performance of any services expected by him in grateful response to his benefactions. Failure to do this is nothing less than a rejection of God's kindness, which could lead to a severance from the sphere of his grace (Gal 1:6; 5:4).

7. Conclusion

Paul uses the language of χάρις throughout his letters not merely to describe, but also to bring about change. In this process, his language of divine benefaction opens up a new understanding of the wholly gracious and generous God who gave up his own son for the worst of all people, namely for sinners. This divine χάρις effects a radical, permanent change in the status of all its recipients. On the basis of God's sovereign gift of new life in Christ ("grace as event") the future of believers is secured; they need not fear the coming

judgment of God. Here and now they also find themselves in God's new sphere of *gratia continua* ("grace as process"). Of course, this knowledge demands a radical new religious orientation from all Paul's readers, both ancient and modern, as the intended recipients of God's benefactions. A life in accordance with the gospel proclaimed by God's apostle is the only fitting expression of gratitude to God's "amazing grace".

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CHAPTER THREE

FORENSIC METAPHORS IN ROMANS AND THEIR SOTERIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Andrie B. du Toit
New Testament Research Unit
University of Pretoria

1. Introductory Remarks

Paul's knowledge of Roman jurisprudence has not escaped the attention of jurists and theologians. Various publications, from the seventeenth century onwards, bear testimony to this.[1] Although the apostle's juristic know-how was sometimes over-estimated, there seems to be consensus that he was no ignoramus in this regard.

An important milestone was the work of the Basel jurist and romanist Otto Eger, who devoted an article (Eger 1917), as well as part of a monograph (Eger 1919, 26–46) to this theme. In a number of publications, Francis Lyall, professor in Public Law at the University of Aberdeen, also focussed on Paul's usage of legal metaphors.[2]

A notable feature of these publications is that they concentrate almost exclusively on matters of civil law (adoption, slavery, inheritance, financial agreements, etc.). Surprisingly, Paul's forensic metaphors received very little scrutiny.

The term "forensic" needs some qualification. In the technical sense, it can refer to all matters pertaining to the law court (Robinson 1996, 518; Gove 1998, 889), thus covering criminal as well as civil cases. However, in common usage, the focus is on the former. Accordingly, in this article, "forensic" will be used for matters dealing with penal law.

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[1] Detailed by Eger (1919, 26–27); Deissmann (1923, 270–271). To their lists should be added Ball, W. E. (1901, chapters 1–3).

[2] Cf. the bibliography. Jerome Hall's (1985) article is mainly a defence of Paul from a jurisprudential perspective.

The mere mention of forensic metaphors in Romans will raise some eyebrows; not only because the incidence of such metaphors is disputed, but also because of the strong reaction against any hint of legalism in Christian religion. This article will indicate, firstly, that Romans in fact displays an impressive array of forensic images; secondly, that the prevalence of such imagery does not stamp Paul's theology as legalistic. The contrary will prove to be the case.

Space limitations prevent a detailed discussion of all the possible forensic metaphors in Romans. For the same reason, I shall concentrate on presenting my case and refrain from a detailed discussion of alternative positions.

2. Some Key Issues

A major issue is the legal system to which Paul refers. Does he have the Roman, a typically Greek, or perhaps the Jewish system in mind? According to Mason (1974, 27), Roman influence was ostensibly strong in administrative and military contexts. The same will also be true of the legal system, especially in areas where there was a prolonged Roman presence. Corinth, where Paul wrote his Romans letter, was rebuilt by Julius Caesar between 46 and 44 BCE and peopled as a Roman colony. It was the capital of Achaea, which became a Roman imperial province in 15 CE Roman law obviously dominated there (Lyall 1984, 226–228). More importantly, Paul was writing to a *Roman* audience, which suggests that he had Roman law in mind. Although the majority of his Roman addressees belonged to the lower strata of the Roman population and hailed from Jewish or Greek backgrounds, they would have been conversant with the main features of Roman law.[3] We can confidently assume that they would interpret his legal terms, although communicated in Greek, in accordance with Roman law.[4]

Related problems are, firstly, that in spite of all the ongoing research on Roman jurisprudence, there still exist deplorable gaps in our

[3] Eger (1919, 29–30) has made some apt remarks on the legal knowledge of the man on the street, while Ball (1901, 2) declares: "To the private citizen some considerable knowledge of law was more than an advantage: it was almost a necessity."

[4] Lyall (1984, 24–25, 225–226) shares this view.

knowledge of Roman law procedure (cf. Cadbury 1933, 299); secondly, that we cannot always determine with confidence the exact Latin equivalent for a specific Greek term.

However, we should not over-accentuate these problems. I hope to show that, in spite of some uncertainties, we can identify the main contours of Paul's argument in terms of forensic imagery. Also, we should not one-sidedly stress the difference between Roman law and the various local forms of law (e.g. Greek, Jewish[5] and Egyptian) at the cost of their procedural agreements. There was a considerable degree of systemic and terminological overlapping.[6] Matters such as a formal charge, a hearing, a final verdict, the presence of a judge or a judging body, of an accused, of a prosecutor, of witnesses and advocates, are common to most judicial systems.[7]

The specific nature of metaphorical language is also an important issue. The first problem is that metaphors are not static. They start out from a typical real life setting, to be subsequently used metaphorically. Sometimes it is difficult to decide whether a specific utterance is still used literally or not. A prime example is Paul's use of ἐθηριομάχησα in 1 Cor 15:32. Did he really face wild animals in Ephesus or was he speaking figuratively? In earlier centuries, his statement was often taken literally;[8] modern exegetes understand it metaphorically (Wolff 1982, 191–192). But that is not the end of our problems. Depending on their adaptability, applicability and popularity, metaphors may, in due time, lose their bond with their original real-life home and become assimilated into everyday, non-figurative language. They become ordinary lexical items. In the sentence, "He wrestles with an alcohol problem," "wrestle" has become part of non-figurative speech. It simply indicates that the person is experiencing

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[5] For some differences between Jewish and Roman law, cf. Neyrey (1996, 110); see also Neyrey (1987).

[6] Taubenschlag devotes a whole chapter to the interrelation between Egyptian, Greek and Roman law in Graeco-Roman Egypt (1972, 1–55). For some remarks on the usage of Greek and graecisms by Roman jurists, see Kunkel (1952, 203–204). On the other hand, indigenous legal practices could, in given situations, show remarkable resistance against the Roman system – Eger (1919, 5–6).

[7] Robinson (1995, 1–14) gives a concise overview of Roman court procedure. Its classical description is, of course, that of Mommsen (1899, 339–520). For court procedure in Greece, see MacDowell (1978, 235–259) and for that in Graeco-Roman Egypt, Taubenschlag (1972, 479–558).

[8] E.g. in the apocryphal *Acta Pauli* 7, where an extensive, dramatic story is made of it.

great difficulty in overcoming his drinking habit. The image of somebody wrestling in the arena has faded away. Similarly, one could ask whether certain formulations in Paul, of forensic origin, have retained their legal connotations.[9]

Another important factor is the coherence and interaction between metaphors deriving from the same real life domain. Semantically, not all of these domains operate on the same level. Some function on a very deep level, such as Johnson's container or road scheme and Lake's Idealized Cognitive Models.[10] Well-known biblical metaphor clusters such as those of shepherding or warfare or athletics, function less deeply. The important thing is that the coherence and interaction between the various components of these images should be recognized. In his ground-breaking study of the dynamics of metaphor in the Gospel of John, Van der Watt has shown convincingly how these metaphor clusters operate.[11] They function as store-houses of potential images which can be selectively activated to provide aesthetic enjoyment (the Aristotelian view), tools of persuasion (the rhetorical view) or simply to mediate knowledge and understanding (the Cognitive Theory). In the Bible, these "store-houses" are used for communicating abstract religious truths and patterns of behaviour. Within such an overarching complex, animate or inanimate objects, events and qualities combine to form a vibrating extended metaphor. If these metaphors re-occur within a given linguistic presentation, they present a broader dynamic story. I shall, therefore, first determine which lexemes could qualify as forensic metaphors. Secondly, it will be necessary to ask whether these lexemes were functioning as interconnected and interactive parts of a coherent image cluster. Finally, the macro-structural implications and soteriological bearing of our findings will be examined.

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[9] Eger (1919, 29–30) already identified this problem.

[10] For a convenient overview, cf. C. Baldauf (2000).

[11] Van der Watt (2000). He uses the terms "imageries" or "composite metaphors" (see especially pp. 18–19, 21, 137–138). For a survey of the development of metaphor theory and especially of the importance of basic or conventional metaphors, see Liebenberg (2001, 48–166); cf. also Klauck's discussion of "Bildfeld" (1978, 141–143).

3. The Incidence of Forensic Metaphors in Romans

As stated, the incidence of forensic metaphors in Romans is disputed. Telling in this regard is what Moore (1998) calls the "semantic gulf" between the two major New Testament word dictionaries, Bauer on the one hand, and Louw-Nida on the other. Whereas Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker[12] interpret δικαιοώ forensically, Louw and Nida[13] understand it in relational (social) terms. Consequently, according to the latter, δικαιοῦσθαι should be translated as "to be put in a right relation with God" and not "to be acquitted by God."[14]

Methodologically, I shall start with passages where the presence of forensic metaphors is the most conspicuous. Consequently, I shall move, rather crab-like, from Rom 8 to Rom 1. Furthermore, I shall proceed, within individual passages, from the certain to the less certain.

3.1. *Rom 8:31–34*

This passage forms the first sub-section of Rom 8:31–39, which functions as the conclusion to the second main section of Romans (Rom 5–8). In more than one sense, Rom 8:31–39 takes up the content and tenor of Rom 5:1–11, thus creating an *inclusio*.[15] After the introductory rhetorical question in v. 31a, six asyndetic questions follow one another. This includes a salvo of no less than four τίς questions, each expecting "nobody" as an answer. In v. 35–39 the argument climaxes in a paean on the certainty and superabundance of victory through the love of God in Jesus Christ.

Regarding the matter of traditional material in this passage, it must suffice to say, first, that Paul was responsible for the final reworking and contextualisation of whatever older material he may

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[12] Moore refers to the second (1979) edition of the English equivalent to Walter Bauer 1963.

[13] Louw and Nida (1988, I, 452–453). They also interpret δικαιοσύνη, δικαίωσις (in Rom 4:25) and δίκαιος (in Rom 1:17) in this sense.

[14] Roberts (1981, 12–23) concurs regarding δικαιοσύνη in Rom 1:17 and 3:21–31. According to Moore (1998, 27–43) all the δικαι-words in Romans and Galatians should be understood relationally.

[15] Cf. the exalted, triumphant style, the themes of justification, love, hope in tribulations, etc.

have used; secondly, that the traditio-redactional problem does not affect the specific forensic terms in this passage.

The following lexemes in Rom 8:31–34 require our attention: ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν and καθ' ἡμῶν (v. 31), παρέδωκεν and χαρίσεται (v. 32), ἐγκαλέσει and δικαιῶν (v. 33) and κατακρινῶν and ἐντυγχάνει (v. 34).

We start with ἐγκαλέσει in v. 33a. In the rest of the New Testament we find eight other occurrences of ἐγκαλέω and ἔγκλημα, all appearing in the book of Acts: 19:38, 40; 23:28, 29 (bis); 25:16; 26:2, 7. Significantly, in all these instances, ἐγκαλέω and ἔγκλημα are used as forensic *termini technici*. Nowhere in the New Testament is either ἐγκαλέω or ἔγκλημα used in an everyday, non-forensic sense. Outside of the New Testament, numerous instances of the forensic use of both words can be found. Septuagint examples are Exod 22:9; Prov 19:5; Wis 12:12; Sir 46:19. In non-biblical Greek, examples abound from Sophocles onwards, including the papyri (Preisigke 1915, s. v.; Danker 2000, s. v.). All indications are, therefore, that ἐγκαλέω in Rom 8:33 should be understood in the sense of laying a criminal charge (*accusatio*).[16] The implied answer to the question in 8:33a is: nobody. The prosecutor (κατήγορος) is missing.

We proceed to κατακρινῶν (v. 34), leaving δικαιῶν (v. 33) aside for the moment. It is noteworthy that, of the fourteen occurrences of κατακρίνω in the New Testament, excepting Romans, at least 10 are clearly forensic. Four refer to the trial of Jesus (Mark 10:33 par. Matt 20:18; Mark 14:64; Matt 27:3) and six to the future eschatological judgement ([Mark 16:16]; Matt 12:41 par. Luke 11:32; Matt 12:42 par. Luke 11:31; 1 Cor 11:32). The remaining four instances are all semi-forensic in character: John 8:10, 11; Heb 11:7; 2 Pet 2:6. Surely κατακρίνω in Rom 8:34 is also used forensically, indicating a negative verdict (*condemnatio*). However, such an outcome is implicitly denied. It has been ruled out by Christ's death "for us" (v. 34). Moreover, the risen Christ is now pleading for them before God.

We return to δικαιῶν in Rom 8:33. Leaving the Pauline *corpus* aside, we find, in the rest of the New Testament, only a few instances of the forensic use of δικαιόω. The one clear example is Matt 12:37. From the context, it is evident that God's eschatological judgement is in focus (cf. ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως v. 36). Acts 13:38–39 may provide

[16] Cf. i.a. Michel (1978, 282–283); Wilckens (1980, 174); Schreiner (1998, 462).

two more instances. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that δικαιῶν in Rom 8:33 is used forensically. Since this verb is positioned between ἐγκαλέσει and κατακρινῶν, both of which are forensic terms, it would need a brave soul to deny its forensic character. This is endorsed by the fact that θεὸς ὁ δικαιῶν forms an antithetically formulated reaction to the τίς ἐγκαλέσει question which precedes it.[17] θεὸς ὁ δικαιῶν explains the absence of the prosecutor. Since God Himself has intervened as the δικαιῶν, the prosecutor could no longer present his case. He in fact no longer had a case to present.[18]

The question arises whether these three verbs have not already lost their bond with their original metaphorical home (the law court). But this is extremely unlikely. We should not allow our familiarity with these well-known biblical words to blunt their original impact on their Roman addressees. The collocation of these terms would hardly have been accidental. It seems obvious that they were chosen on purpose and function as live, interactive metaphors, reflecting various stages of a trial scenario:[19] The believers are standing before the heavenly throne of judgement. They deserve to be condemned. But a totally unexpected twist occurs. Contrary to all expectations, the guilty are acquitted. God is not, in so many words, depicted as the judge (the δικαστής or κριτής), but the phrase θεὸς ὁ δικαιῶν implies that this is the case.

Can we trace any other forensic elements? Within the given context, it seems quite plausible that the terms ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν and καθ' ἡμῶν could be part of the judicial imagery. Let us start with καθ' ἡμῶν. The use of the preposition κατά with the genitive as a marker of opposition is well substantiated throughout Greek literature. Κατά, in the antagonistic sense, was applied extensively in connection with

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[17] Schreiner (1998, 462): "In this context the forensic sense of δικαιοῦν is undeniable, since it serves as the antonym of ἐγκαλεῖν." Surprisingly, Louw and Nida interpret δικαιοώ in Acts 13:38, where the forensic connotations are much less explicit, in the sense of a legal acquittal (1988, I, 557), but in Romans they prefer the relational understanding (1988, I, 452–453). Still more surprising is that they view δικαίωσις in Rom 4:25 as relational, but in 5:18 as forensic (1988, I, 452, 557).

[18] In Rev 12:10 Satan is envisaged as the κατήγωρ (= κατήγορος· *accusator, delator*) who has lost his *locus standi* at the heavenly court and was thrown out. Is Paul thinking along the same lines?

[19] Cf. Dunn (1988, 510–511).

court proceedings. It denoted charges *against* a person. It is used of the charges *against* Jesus (Luke 23:14; John 18:29) as well as Paul (Acts 25:14, 27). In one of the papyri (P. Fay. 12:8) the writer declares: "Concerning these matters I laid the customary charges *against* him (κατ' αὐτοῦ)?" (cf. Moulton and Milligan 1972, 322). In P. Oxy. 6:898, 34 the expression κατ' αὐτῆς προελθεῖν is used of proceedings against a female person. In Acts 24:1; 25:2 κατά is used of those opposing Paul at court. Mark 14:55–57 (cf. Matt 26:59) refers to witnesses *against* Jesus. In Acts 25:15 this preposition is applied in connection with a possible verdict *against* Paul.[20] More significantly, the Sanhedrin is portrayed in Matt 27:1 as convening a court hearing *against* Jesus. If καθ' ἡμῶν is forensic, the same will be true of ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, since these two phrases form a contrasting pair: Ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν may therefore refer to the judge's positive disposition towards the accused, in contrast to καθ' ἡμῶν, indicating a negative attitude. This judge is violating all normal canons of impartiality. He is unashamedly on the side of the believers!

What about παρέδωκεν in v. 32: God who "delivered up" his son? In forensic contexts, παραδίδωμι designates the *handing over* of somebody, either to be tried or to be punished.[21] In Rom 8:32 the first meaning could be in focus, although it would then be used *pars pro toto*. However, the second possibility seems preferable: God handing over his own son to be punished on behalf of the accused. Thus we have here a second court case, embedded into the first, but chronologically preceding it. Jesus' condemnation on behalf of the believers serves to substantiate God's positive disposition. Subsequently, his death is highlighted as basis for their acquittal (v. 34).

It cannot be ruled out that even χαρίσεται belongs to the forensic cluster. In Acts this verb is used three times to denote the gracious favour of a judge towards one of the parties: 3:14; 25:11, 16. In P. Flor. 61:59ff, G Septimus Vegetus, the prefect of Egypt, gives the following verdict against a certain Phybion: "You would have deserved to be scourged, . . . but I am granting you (χαρίζομαι σε)

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[20] This usage of κατά was also prevalent among classical writers. Cf. Liddel and Scott (1883, 749).

[21] The gospels and Acts contain ample instances of both the forensic and the semi-forensic usage of this verb: Matt 4:12; 5:25; 10:4, 17, 19, 21; 17:22; 18:34, etc.; for extra-biblical examples, see Moulton and Milligan (1972, s. v.) and Danker (2000, s. v.).

to the multitude" (Deissmann 1923, 229; Moulton and Milligan 1972, 684). In the case of Rom 8:32 χαρίσεται may therefore indicate a favour for the benefit of the accused. The argument moves from the greater to the lesser. If this judge gave his son for the benefit of the accused, he would certainly also bestow minor benefits on them.

Translations and commentaries usually struggle to make sense of τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίσεται. They have particular problems with the meaning of τὰ πάντα and propose various dubious solutions.[22] With a view to the forensic context of this passage, it can be asked whether τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίσεται does not refer to a complete pardon: If God did not spare his own Son, but handed him over on our behalf, would He not also "*grant us a complete pardon/acquit us totally*"? Surely this understanding, which falls completely within the semantic range of χαρίζομαι, fits the context excellently.

Does ἐντυγχάνει (8:34) also belong to the forensic cluster, as has been suggested by Michel (1978, 281), Dunn (1988, 511) and Haacker (1999, 175 note 25)?[23] Two reasons could justify such an enquiry:

- It is clear that the motif of a court scenario is dominant in Rom 8:31–34. Jesus' plea for us could therefore also belong to this imagery.
- The παράκλητος concept, which in 1 John 2:1 runs closely parallel to ἐντυγχάνω,[24] probably had forensic connotations (Behm 1954, 798–812).

The verb ἐντυγχάνω occurs five times in the New Testament: Acts 25:24; Rom 8:27, 34; 11:2 and Heb 7:25. To this could be added ὑπερεντυγχάνω in Rom 8:26. From contextual indications, it is clear that ἐντυγχάνω in Rom 11:2 is non-forensic. The same will probably be true of ἐντυγχάνω in Rom 8:27[25] and ὑπερεντυγχάνω in Rom 8:26. But this does not rule out that ἐντυγχάνω in Rom 8:34 may have been used forensically. In Acts 25:24, within the context of the trial of Paul, this verb could have a technical or semi-technical connotation. In this regard it is significant that the concept of ἔντευξις,

[22] Cf. Dunn (1988, 502); Schreiner (1998, 460–461).

[23] Dunn describes Jesus as the judge's "right-hand man", in fact as an advocate, and Haacker speaks of him as the "Verteidiger".

[24] In both these instances, and also in Heb 7:25, it is the exalted Christ who acts on behalf of his people before the throne of God.

[25] Also in Heb 7:25, where the high priest Christology dominates.

as well as the verb ἐντυγχάνω, formed part of Egyptian court proceedings.[26] In the Roman law system the idea of intercession was well-known. *Intercessiones*, *interpellationes*, *petitiones*, and *appellationes*, together with their cognate verbs, were all familiar concepts. Unfortunately the exact Latin equivalent for ἐντυγχάνει in Rom 8:34 is uncertain. The great majority of Latin versions translate it with *interpellat*. A few witnesses (i. a. Hilarius) prefer *postulat*.[27] Yet we cannot be sure whether any of these two verbs or the verbal form of any of the other terms mentioned above would exactly represent ἐντυγχάνει. It seems, therefore, wise, at this stage, to leave the matter open. Most probably ἐντυγχάνω is forensic.[28] On the other hand, it may be the non-forensic beginning of a new stage in the discourse which focuses on the greatness and power of Christ's love towards his own: In all circumstances Christians can feel absolutely secure because Jesus Christ is pleading for them before God's throne.[29]

What would be the time setting of this court scenario? The future verbal forms (χαρίσεται, ἐγκαλέσει and κατακρινῶν) do not help us, since we cannot determine whether they are real or logical futures. We should therefore look for further evidence. From elsewhere we know that Paul definitely reckoned with a court session at the consummation of history (cf. Rom 2:5–11, 16; 14:10–12; 2 Cor 5:10, etc.). On the other hand, the very important present participle δικαιῶν (8:33), which expresses a durative, ongoing action of God, is often overlooked. Believers are here and now experiencing God as the justifier of sinners.

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[26] See Mitteis & Wilcken (1912, II, 12–21); Preisigke (1915, s. v.); Deissmann (1923, 175, 286); Taubenschlag (1955, 495–496). These ἐντεύξεις εἰς τὸ τοῦ βασιλέως ὄνομα were pleas for royal intervention, which functioned also in criminal lawsuits; see Mitteis & Wilcken (1912, 21 note 2).

[27] Cf. Sabatier (1987, 625) and especially footnote 34.

[28] The dominance of the idea of a trial in Rom 8:31–34 certainly suggests this, but does not *require* such a conclusion. The forensic imagery in Rom 8:31–34 is not pure in the sense that it excludes all non-forensic elements. Embedded into the forensic imagery are "alien" elements (cf. vv. 32, 34) brought in to convey aspects of meaning which the forensic vocabulary could not express. For this phenomenon, cf. Baldauf (2000, 128–131).

[29] One could ask whether ὑπερνικῶμεν in v. 37 does not echo the foregoing court scenario, since νικάω was often used in the sense of winning a legal battle (cf. Rom 3:4 and Danker 2000, s. v. νικάω 1b). However, the hardships rather point to a victory in the sporting arena (Haacker 1999, 177).

What would be the relationship between this experience and the final future court drama? Should we say that believers proleptically experience their future justification as a reality? This widely accepted view is not impossible, but the question is whether it does not diminish the force of Paul's proposition and thereby the basis for the jubilant tones of Rom 8:31–39 (cf. 5:1–11). As we have already noted, there is a strong correlation between Rom 5:1–11 and 8:31–39. The Aorist participle δικαιωθέντες of Rom 5:1 and the δικαιῶν of 8:34 should be read together. This means that God *has already justified* the believers and that he *is constantly justifying* them. This court session is an ongoing process[30] which will culminate in the final drama at the end of history. In this sense, we should agree with Bultmann that man's encounter with God always has eschatological quality. In the original faith encounter of believers and their acceptance of the good news, they have a decisive experience of being justified (5:1), but they remain constantly in need of justification. They are therefore being justified continuously. It is this exhilarating experience of God as justifier, which calls forth the triumphant chords of Rom 5:1–11 and 8:31–39. Rom 8:31–39 is a celebration of the reality of divine acquittal and the ongoing triumph of God's children.

In terms of accepted judicial procedure, this is a highly irregular case. First, according to Roman law, a criminal case had to be dismissed if the prosecutor failed to appear (Robinson 1995, 5). Yet this court case proceeds until the final verdict is pronounced. Secondly, the judge is biased. He sides blatantly with the accused, making the not-guilty verdict a foregone conclusion. Finally, the accused are acquitted, even though they obviously are guilty (Rom 3:9–20). At least three accepted canons of the judicial system are violated. But it is exactly this crossing of expectations, this unexpected surprise, which heightens the effect of this metaphor. It has a dramatic impact, and leaves a lasting impression.[31]

At the same time, however, this judge does not compromise the integrity of the *iustitia* ideal as such. By surrendering his son unto death, he restores the balance.

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[30] Cf the discussion on 1:18–32.
[31] See also Van der Watt (2000, 384–391).

3.2. *Rom 2:1–16*

This passage belongs to the first half (1:18–3:20) of the first main section (1:18–4:25) of Romans. In 1:18–3:20 Paul portrays humanity's common guilt before God. It is clear that he addresses the sins of the heathen nations in 1:18–32, and those of the Jews in 2:17ff. However, the position of 2:1–16 is unclear. Does it implicitly deal with the transgressions of the Jewish people as Schreiner thinks (1998, 105–126, 127)? If so, one would have expected a clearer transitional marker in 2:1, indicating that the Jews are now addressed. Since we find such a marker only in 2:17, it would be more appropriate to view 2:1–16 as a bridge passage, linking on to the sins of the heathen mentioned in the previous passage, but at the same time preparing for Paul's exposure of Jewish sin in 2:17ff.

Rom 2:1–16 starts with an imaginary interlocutor. This person could be either a Jew or a non-Jew, but definitely one occupying the moral high ground and judging that Paul's foregoing indictment does not really apply to him. At the same time, since especially Jews would identify with these sentiments, the passage is preparing for the indictment of the latter in 2:17ff.

The following lexemes in this passage are relevant: ἀναπολόγητος and ἀπολογέομαι (vv. 1, 15), κρίνω (vv. 1 [3x], 3, 12, 16), κρίμα (vv. 2, 3), κατακρίνω (v. 1), πράσσω (vv. 1, 2, 3), ὀργή (vv. 5 [bis], 8), δικαιοκρισία (v. 5), ἀδικία (v. 8), προσωπολημψία (v. 11), δίκαιος (v. 13), δικαιόω (v. 13), συμμαρτυρέω (v. 15), κατηγορέω (v. 15).

From the very start it is clear that the final judgement figures prominently (cf. also 14:10: πάντες γὰρ παραστησόμεθα τῷ βήματι τῷ θεῷ). Verses 5–11 and 16 cannot be understood otherwise. Ἡμέρα (vv. 5, 16) is clearly used in the traditional sense of the day of judgement (Delling 1960, 955–956). In v. 16 the present form κρίνει is text-critically to be preferred to κρινεῖ. However, there is no doubt that κρίνει should be understood as a futuristic present, being a confident assertion "intended to arrest attention with a vivid or realistic tone or else with imminent fulfilment in mind" (Turner 1963, 63). Due to the undoubtedly forensic setting of this passage, it is superfluous to argue for the forensic character of κρίνω, κρίμα and κατακρίνω (cf. supra). The same applies to κατηγορέω, which forms such an intrinsic part of forensic vocabulary (cf. only Mark 15:3 par. Matt 27:12; Mark 15:4; Luke 23:2, 10, 14; Acts 22:30; 24:2, 8, 13, 19, etc.).

We turn to ἀναπολόγητος and ἀπολογέομαι. Apart from Rom 2:15, ἀπολογέομαι appears seven times in the New Testament in a forensic sense (Luke 12:11; 21:14; Acts 24:10; 25:8; 26:1, 2, 24) and once in a semi-forensic one (Acts 19:33). The only exception is 2 Cor 12:19. In addition, ἀπολογία occurs five times in a forensic context (Acts 22:1; 25:16; 1 Cor 9:3; Phil 1:7; 2 Tim 4:16) and twice in a semi-forensic one (Phil 1:16 and 1 Pet 3:15). In fact, the only exception is 2 Cor 7:11. Apart from Rom 2:1 and 1:20, ἀναπολόγητος appears nowhere else in the New Testament. However, outside the New Testament, we have many examples of its forensic usage, e.g. Josephus *C. Ap.* 2:137; Polybius *Hist.* 12:21, 10; 29:10, 5; Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 7:46, 4; Plutarch *Brut.* 46:2; Dio Chrysostom *Or.* 2:39. We can therefore confidently accept that in the context of Rom 2:1–16 ἀναπολόγητος as well as ἀπολογέομαι contribute to the court scenario.[32]

We now look at ὀργή (2:5 [bis], 8). It is certainly one of the most common judicial terms in the New Testament: Matt 3:7 par. Luke 3:7; John 3:36; 1 Thess 1:10; 2:16; 5:9; Eph 2:3; 5:6; Col 3:6; Rev 6:16, 17; 11:18; 14:10; 16:19; 19:15.[33] Also in Romans, it is clear that ὀργή refers to the negative reaction of the divine judge. This is endorsed by the contexts of 2:5 (bis), 8 and 9:22. Also in 3:5; 4:15; 5:9 and 13:4–5 it will not be different (for 1:18, cf. infra). However, it is virtually impossible to decide whether and where "wrath" or "judgement" or "punishment" would be its best translational equivalent. "To store up ὀργη" in Rom 2:5, would more appropriately refer to God's punishment. Also in 1:18–32, God's ὀργή unfolds in the form of punishment (1:24ff). If we would understand it as "wrath", it seems clear that the focus is more on the strong negative *action* of the judge than on the *emotional* aspect. On the other hand, the combination of ὀργή and θυμός in Rom 2:8 seems to indicate that the emotional aspect should not be excluded.[34] It seems that Paul did

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[32] For the ἀπολογία word-group in Acts, see Tajra (1989, 125, 156).

[33] The positive corollary to ὀργή in judiciary contexts is ἔπαινος (cf. Rom 2:29; 13:3). In Aelius Aristides *Rhet. Leuktr.* II 22 these opposites are neatly balanced: ἐυρίσκω τοὺς μὲν ὀργῆς, τοὺς δ' ἐπαίνου κριθέντας ἂν ἀξίους ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν (Jepp p. 433 line 14).

[34] Cf. Rev 14:10; 16:9; 19:15; for θυμός alone, see Rev 14:19; 15:1, 7; 16:1; 18:3). Haacker (1999, 47) comments: "Gemeint ist keine blosse Stimmung Gottes, aber auch keine gefühllose Amtshandlung eines himmlichen Richters."

not have our fine distinctions in mind. We shall have to decide in each context what the appropriate translation would be.[35] Here in Rom 2:5, 8, "punishment" seems to be preferable. More importantly, ὀργή is obviously used forensically.

Δικαιοκρισία is certainly also a judicial term. Not only its components, but also its collocation in v. 5 with ὀργή, vouch for this (cf. ἔνδειγμα τῆς *δικαίας κρισεώς* τοῦ θεοῦ in 2 Thess 1:5). It can also be substantiated from the papyri.[36]

We come to δικαιόω and δίκαιος (v. 13). As we have seen already, δικαιόω in Rom 8:33 refers to God's justifying activity. Here in 2:13, it will certainly convey the same meaning.[37] Since δίκαιοι παρὰ τῷ θεῷ in Rom 2:13 is parallel to δικαιωθήσονται, the latter can help us to assign meaning to the former. We can infer that δίκαιοι παρὰ τῷ θεῷ indicates the state or condition of having been justified or declared righteous by God.

Although Louw and Nida do not use the terms "legal" or "forensic" in connection with the verb συμμαρτυρέω, they explain it as "to provide confirming evidence by means of a testimony" (1988, I, 418). The context of Rom 2:15 shows that συμμαρτυρούσης is in this case definitely used forensically.[38] The preposition σύν indicates that the conscience is giving corroborating evidence, but the primary witness is not identified. Within the context it is most probably the heathens' knowledge of what the law of God requires of them (τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν). Their conscience is depicted as an inner court in session,[39] at which their conflicting thoughts accuse or even (emphatic καί) defend them.

Once again we have a court session within a court session (cf. Rm 8:32), but this time the embedded court scenario does not act as a basis for acquittal. It brings confirming negative evidence before the eschatological judge. This inner trial is sometimes understood as

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[35] In *Martyrers of Lyon* 50 (Musurillo 1972 p. 78:5) there is mention of a governor at a trial "flying into a rage": ἐν ὀργῇ γενόμενος.

[36] Moulton and Milligan (1972, 161). In P. Oxy. 1:71, 1, 4 a petitioner appeals to the prefect: "hoping confidently to receive fair judgement (δικαιοκρισίας τυχεῖν) from your Magnificence."

[37] The same is the case in Rom 3:20, 24, 26, 28, 30; 4:2, 5; 5:1, 9; 6:7 and probably also 8:30 (bis). The only clear exception in Romans is 3:4, which is a LXX quotation: God "will be proven right (δικαιωθῇς) in what he says."

[38] In Rom 8:16, and especially in 9:1, we can perhaps speak of a semi-forensic use.

[39] Cf. P. R. Bosman (1996, 294–296).

taking place, at least initially, in the present,[40] reaching out towards the final drama. However, the time qualification ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὅτε κρίνει ὁ θεὸς κτλ in verse 16 situates it directly at the final trial. The present tenses of v. 15 should therefore, like κρίνει in v. 16, be understood as vividly presenting future events.

We now come to some less certain lexemes. We start with προσωπολημψία in 2:11. This Hebraism (Moulton & Milligan 1972, s. v. προσωπολημπτέω) appears, apart from Rom 2:11, only three times in the New Testament: Eph 6:9; Col 3:25 and Jas 2:1. Προσωπολημπτέω and προσωπολήμπτης occur only once each (Jas 2:9 and Acts 10:34). In none of these instances does it indicate a forensic background. But due to the forensic character of Rom 2:1–16, Rom 2:11 may be an exception. The absence of favouritism would certainly be one of the most basic requirements for a judge. Without it he will not be able to practise δικαιοκρισία.

From the context, it is impossible to make a decision on ἀδικία (v. 8). In view of the overall forensic context, a juridic connotation cannot be excluded. On the other hand, the participle πειθομένοις may indicate moral wrongdoing (cf. the contrastive ἀπειθοῦσι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ).

We return to πράσσω in Rom 2:1–3. This verb can be used in a wide variety of contexts. Maurer's statement (1959, 636) that, in about two thirds of its New Testament instances, it occurs in a negative sense, is true also of Paul (Rom 1:32; 2:1–3; 7:19; 13:4; 1 Cor 5:2; 2 Cor 12:21; Gal 5:21). Yet this is due to negative contexts; there is nothing inherently negative in πράσσω (cf. 2:25). As used here, it does not seem to form part of the judicial vocabulary although it is used within the context of a trial scene.

At this stage we should register the problem that certain statements in this section (cf. vv. 6–10 and 15–16) seem to contradict Paul's argument elsewhere, that all humanity stands guilty before God (see especially 3:9–20). This issue will be addressed later on.

3.3. *Rom 1:18–32*

In this passage, Paul sketches the sinfulness of the heathen nations and God's reaction to it. It sub-divides into two sections: 1:18–23

[40] Cf. Schreiner (1998, 124–125).

and 1:24–32. In 1:18–23 the sins of the heathen against God are depicted in strong language of inversion. In spite of their knowledge of God through his works of creation, they did not honour Him, but exchanged his worship for that of the idols. In 1:24–32, God's punishment is described: it consists of handing these people over to themselves. This results in further inversion: lesbianism and homosexuality (1:26–27) and all other kinds of depravity (1:28–32). Verse 18 occupies a prominent position. It functions as a summarising caption, the two main *foci* of the passage being God's punishment, depicted as the ὀργὴ θεοῦ, and the sins of the heathen people (πᾶσαν ἀσέβειαν καὶ ἀδικίαν), indicating the reason for that punishment. In the following discourse, these two *foci* are taken up in a chiastic arrangement.

Already Erich Klostermann (1933, 1–6) made clear that this whole section deals with the "Straffgerechtigkeit Gottes". In order to test, and, possibly undergird this view, we shall give attention to the following lexemes: ὀργὴ θεοῦ, ἀσέβεια (v. 18), ἀδικία (vv. 18[bis], 29), ἀναπολογήτος (v. 20), παραδίδωμι (vv. 24, 26, 28), φυσικὴ χρῆσις (vv. 26, 27), παρὰ φύσιν (v. 26) and ἄξιος θανάτου (v. 32).

We start with ὀργὴ θεοῦ (v. 18) and ἄξιος θανάτου (v. 32). We have already seen that ὀργή is one of the very common forensic terms in the New Testament and that Paul uses it in the same sense elsewhere. Especially in combination with θεοῦ, as here in 1:18, its forensic character cannot be denied. It is the almighty God and Creator of the universe who acts as the judge and enacts his punishment over the nations. Also ἄξιοι θανάτου in the concluding v. 32 is at home in the law court. Ἄξιος plus the genitive was widely applied to indicate a person's guilt or surmised guilt. In the New Testament outside Romans, it is used in this sense in Luke 12:48; 23:15, 41; Acts 23:29; 25:11, 25; 26:31. In the verdict of the prefect of Egypt reflected in P. Flor. 61:59f, ἄξιος is followed by the infinitive: "You would have deserved (ἄξιος ἦς) to be scourged (μαστιγωθῆναι)."[41] Linguistically, the first and last slots of an utterance usually carry the most weight. The fact that both v. 18 and v. 32 apply typically forensic language suggests that this whole passage should be read within the framework of a law court scenario. Do we find further evidence of this?

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[41] Other random examples include Wis 18:4: "For they deserved (ἄξιοι) to be deprived of light and imprisoned in darkness"; Josephus (*Ant.* 6:315, 5; 11:144, 5).

We turn to ἀσέβεια and ἀδικία. Speaking in terms of a (metaphorically applied) criminal process, these two words would indicate the gist of the offence of which the heathen would have been guilty. Ἀσέβεια refers to man's basic offence against God (1:18–23), while ἀδικία characterizes his moral guilt (1:24–32), which, on the one hand, is the result of God's delivering him up to his own desires, but, on the other, increases his guilt before the divine judge. Both these words contain nothing intrinsically forensic. They were originally borrowed, ἀσέβεια from cultic vocabulary, ἀδικία from general moral vocabulary. It is therefore possible that they do not carry any forensic undertones as such.

Having said this, one may nevertheless ask whether there may not be something more to the choice of ἀσέβεια (cf. ἐσεβάσθησαν – v. 25). We know that around the Mediterranean basin ἀσέβεια became a technical term for the violation of the *ius sacrum*. In Ptolemaic Egypt, ἀσέβεια was used to indicate crimes against the state (which was identified with the sovereign) (Taubenschlag 1972, 473–474). In Greece, the procedure of γραφή could be used against any kind of impiety (ἀσέβεια), e.g. violent conduct in temples or against temple officials, magic and atheism (MacDowell 1978, 197–202). In Rome, offences affecting the supreme authority of the Roman state, including the emperor, were termed ἀσέβεια. The Greek term ἀσέβεια depicted what the Romans called *crimen maiestatis imminutae* (see especially Mommsen 1899, 537–540, 580–585). Philo provides us with two examples. He tells us of a certain Lampo who was on trial because of impiety (ἀσέβεια) towards Tiberius Caesar (*Flacc.* 128:6). And in *Legat.* 355:5 Isidorus accuses the Jewish people of ἀσέβεια towards the emperor. Ἀσέβεια was seen as an "Ehrenkränkung" (Mommsen, ibidem) of Roman authority and especially of the emperor. It was treated as a major offence. Does Paul's ἀσέβεια in Rom 1:18 allude to this? This seems possible indeed. The apostle highlights the majestic greatness of God as the creator of the universe (especially in vv. 20 and 25), and the shocking nature of the heathens' perverse dealings with this great God. They have exchanged (ἤλλαξαν) the glory or majesty (sic)[42] of the immortal God for mere creatures,

[42] It is significant that, in certain contexts, *maiestas* is the appropriate Latin equivalent for δόξα. In fact, in *BAGD*, the ἀλλάσσειν τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ of Rom 1:23 is understood as "exchange of the majesty of God" – see Danker (2000, s. v.).

even such lowly things as reptiles (v. 23)! They have bartered away (μετήλλαξαν) his truth for the lie and turned to the worship of mere creatures instead of the almighty creator – the maker of everything, who is entitled to be eternally praised (v. 25)! If this was not an "Ehrenkränkung", an infringement of the *maiestas* of the heavenly Ruler, nothing else would be. It seems, therefore, entirely possible that Paul, especially with a view to the frame of reference of his Roman audience, depicts the sins of the heathen in terms of *crimen maiestatis imminutae*, that is, as a capital offence, not against the Roman sovereign, but against the almighty Creator-King of the universe.

Concerning ἀδικία in 1:18,[43] we face the same uncertainty as in 2:8. As we have seen, ἀναπολογήτος is often used forensically. This is also the case in 1:20. The accused cannot plead innocence because they have God's revelation in his creation. The same is the case with παραδίδωμι (cf. Rom 8:32). Παρέδωκεν occurs prominently no less than three times (vv. 24, 26, 28) and indicates the punishment meted out by the heavenly judge (Klostermann 1933, 1–6; Haacker 1999, 45).

Even the φύσις vocabulary, used in connection with homo-eroticism (vv. 26–27), may have forensic undertones. The terms "natural" and "unnatural" in the condemnation of homosexuality were applied by the Greco-Roman moralists as well as by Hellenistic Jewish writers like Philo and Josephus. Paul would have derived his formulation from sources such as these, or from a popularisation of this theme, although his motivation would only partly coincide with that of the moralists.[44] It seems noteworthy, however, that the idea of the *ius naturale* played an important role in this period (Levy 1963; Waldstein 1976, 78–89, 99–100; cf. also Reijnders 1954). What was "according to nature" and "against nature" belonged to the essentials of the development of Roman jurisprudence.[45] As early as 226 BCE, the Lex Scantinia penalized homosexual practices. It was subsequently applied in 50 BCE and later under Domitian. Also Suetonius, Juvenal and others referred to it. Although mostly dormant, this legislation was nevertheless applied from time to time (usually to score political points).[46] We should therefore not rule out entirely the possibility

[43] In 1:29 its reference is exclusively moral.
[44] I argue this in Du Toit (2003, 100).
[45] For Cicero, cf. especially *De Leg.* I, 43ff.
[46] Bailey (1955, 64–67); DeYoung (1988, 436); for the *Lex Julia*, see Bailey (1955, 67–70).

that Paul's anti-homosexual language in Rom 1:26–27 may have had forensic associations.

This trial scenario agrees with Rom 2:1–16 and 8:31–34 in that God is the acting judge. It differs from Rom 8:31–34 in that the accused are not the believers, but the heathen nations. It also differs from Rom 2:1–16 in that only the heathen nations are in view, while in the latter, God's judgement concerns Jews and Greeks alike. On the other hand, it agrees, against 2:1–16, with 8:31–34, in that both scenarios are taking place in the present. This is ensured by the present tense ἀποκαλύπτεται (v. 18) and the aorist παρέδωκεν (vv. 24, 26, 28). This judgement unfolds itself *in* history.

What constitutes the guilt of the nations before the divine judge? Basically it does not consist of individual sins, but of the refusal to acknowledge God as God. Rom 15:1–13 depicts δοξάζειν τὸν θεόν as man's God-intended obligation. Not only the Jews, but also the heathen should honour him as God.[47] In this vein Abraham honoured God (δοὺς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ) by taking him on his word (Rom 4:20). *Mutatis mutandis*, the ἀσέβεια of the heathen nations consists of their refusal to honour and thank him as God (Rom 1:21). Not to recognize and honour God for who he is, and to trade him for false gods, is the primary sin, the basic source from which all other sins derive (cf. 1:24–32). Dishonouring God results in the dishonouring of man (ἀτιμάζεσθαι τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν). The inversion of man's God-relationship results in the inversion of human sexual relations. Not honouring God includes the refusal to praise him, but also the refusal to obey his law as inscribed in one's heart (2:14–15). In their own way, also the Jews dishonour God. This is implied already in 2:1. In 2:23 it is stated in so many words (cf. τὸν θεὸν ἀτιμάζεις).

3.4. *Rom 1:16–17*

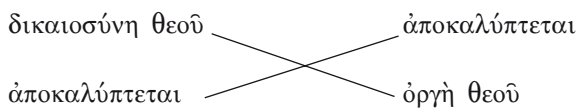
As we have seen, all three previous passages envisage a trial scenario. Paul is arguing, metaphorically, in terms of penal procedure. How does Rom 1:16–17 relate to this?

The two relevant lexemes are δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and δίκαιος (v. 17). Leaving aside the lengthy discussions of the possible background(s)

[47] See Du Toit (1993, 72–77).

of δικαιοσύνη,[48] I shall limit myself to four observations which are, in my opinion, essential to this enquiry:

a) Commentaries commonly accept that Rom 1:16–17 contains the theme statement of Romans, and that 1:18ff is the beginning of its unfolding and vindication. Therefore, it will be only natural to expect semantic coherence between 1:16–17 and 1:18ff. Since the entire linguistic stretch from 1:18–2:16 displays forensic imagery, it will not be unreasonable to expect something similar from Rom 1:16–17.
b) There is a special antithetical correlation between vv. 17a and 18a. Usually the components of a chiasmus function within the same linguistic unit. Since vv. 17 and 18 belong to different sections within the overall structure of Romans, it is somewhat problematic to speak of a chiasmus. And yet it is clear that there exists an obvious chiastic link between prominent sections of vv. 17 and 18, confirming the antithetical correspondence between δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and ὀργὴ θεοῦ:[49]



If ὀργὴ θεοῦ indicates the heavenly judge's negative judgement, it is reasonable to accept that δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ reflects his positive verdict.

c) It has often been debated whether θεοῦ, in the phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, is a possessive genitive, a subjective genitive, a qualitative genitive or a genitive of origin. In all three passages which we have already discussed, God is depicted as the acting judge. This makes it most probable that δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in 1:17 indicates an action of God, θεοῦ being a subjective genitive. Linguistically, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ can be broken down into the basic kernel sentence: God justifies/acquits (sinners). At a less deep level, we can translate it as "God's justification/acquittal (of sinners)". In this formulation, the genitive θεοῦ acquires an adjectival sense, but it still indicates God as the subject of the justifying action, in the same

[48] But see note 58.
[49] There may also be a linguistic play between ἐν ἀυτῷ and ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ.

way as the phrase "God's love (for us)" indicates an activity of God.

d) Δίκαιος should also be understood forensically for two reasons: Firstly, although δίκαιος in Rom 1:17b appears in a quotation (LXX Hab 2:4b), we must follow the exegetical rule that meaning is primarily determined by the immediate context. Rom 1:17b functions as a scriptural vindication of 1:17a. We should therefore expect a close correlation between δίκαιος and δικαιοσύνη. Secondly, we have seen that δίκαιοι (παρὰ τῷ θεῷ) in Rom 2:13 is used in the forensic sense of being in the condition of having been justified by God. Taking our clue from 2:13, we can expect that δίκαιος in 1:17b will bear the same meaning.

We see a coherent picture unfolding. In splashing δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as theme and following it up with a scriptural quotation containing the adjective δίκαιος, Paul is triggering associations with a court trial. But contrary to the trials in Rom 1:18–32 and 2:1–16, a positive outcome is envisaged. Πίστις and πιστεύω are introduced as the means by which God's acquittal is appropriated.

In 1:16–17, Paul formulates the quintessence of his gospel (cf. εὐαγγέλιον [v. 16] and ἐν αὐτῷ [v. 17]). This trial scene agrees, in essence, with that of Rom 8:31–34 (cf. also 3:21–31).

3.5. *Rom 3:21–31*

This crucial passage fits in well at this point, because it is essentially an explication of what has been said programmatically in Rom 1:16–17. Everything that stands before in 1:18–3:20 is, in a sense, *prolegomena*. An ailment must be diagnosed before the medicine can be applied. The introductory νὺνι δέ of 3:20 is extraordinarily pregnant with meaning, whether we view it as rhetorical, temporal or both.[50] Now at last, Paul can drive home his main thesis, the point envisaged already in 1:16–17. This is clearly indicated by the way δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ πεφανέρωται (3:21) echoes and reintroduces the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἀποκαλύπτεται of 1:17.

Rom 3:21–31 can be sub-divided into 3:21–26 and 3:27–31. The first sub-section concentrates on the fact of, and basis for justification; the second draws some conclusions by means of questions and answers in diatribal style.

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[50] A choice is impossible. Most probably the two meanings coincide.

This complicated passage, and especially 3:21–26, teems with forensic expressions. Yet, due to the repetition of certain lexemes, the spectrum of its judicial vocabulary is fairly limited. The following lexemes are relevant: δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ αὐτοῦ (4x: vv. 21, 22, 25, 26), δικαιόω (4x: vv. 24, 26, 28, 30), μαρτύρουμαι (v. 21), ἔνδειξις (vv. 25, 26), πάρεσις τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων (v. 25) and δίκαιος (v. 26).[51]

Read in the light of the forensic passages previously discussed, we have every reason to accept that δικαιοσύνη, which, in all four instances, is followed by a genitive referring to God (3:21, 22, 25, 26), designates God's justification/acquittal of the guilty, and δικαιοώ (3:24, 26, 28, 30) the event of being justified/declared not guilty.

In Rom 2:15, we found that συμμαρτυρέω was used forensically. This is also the case with μαρτυρέω (v. 21), the law and the prophets being the two witnesses.

The word ἔνδειξις (vv. 25, 26) indicates a "convincing demonstration", "proof", "evidence". Although it may not be a forensic term as such, in this context God's justification is publicly demonstrated within a court room setting. Concerning πάρεσις, the study of Kümmel (1952, 154–167) makes it clear that this word is not identical to ἄφεσις. It denotes the judicial remission of punishment. It may also be significant that ἁμάρτημα (cf. the genitive plural ἁμαρτημάτων, which qualifies πάρεσις) also appears in judicial contexts.[52]

Δίκαιος in 3:26 is not used in the same sense as in 1:17 and 2:13. It has to do with the ethical quality of being righteous or just. More precisely, God is vindicated as the righteous judge.

Since this trial scene zooms in on what was cryptically indicated in 1:16–17, it elaborates on the latter. In 1:16–17, we have no clear time indication. Here it becomes clear that God's justifying activity, like his punishment (1:18–32), is an ongoing process. It has already been made manifest (πεφανέρωται [v. 21]); it is taking place here and now (δικαιούμενοι [v. 24]; δικαιοῦντα [v. 26]); it is "clearly demonstrated" (vv. 24, 26) in the present (ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ [v. 26]); and it will culminate in God's final justifying act at the end of time (δικαίωσει [v. 30]). In 1:17, the acquitted were only vaguely identified. Here they are specified as those who, like all humanity, sinned against

[51] Rom 3:21–26 contains much traditional material, but this does not really affect this investigation.

[52] Taubenschlag (1972, 430); cf. also the papyrus examples in Moulton & Milligan (1972, 25).

God (v. 23, taking up 3:9–20), but are now saved through grace. In 1:17 we find no indication of Christ's soteriological work as the basis for God's justification. Here it is prominently stated. It is a salient feature of this trial scenario that, like Rom 8:31–34, it contains two specific references to what Christ has done on our behalf. Both of them are in the form of metaphors: Ἀπολύτρωσις (3:24) depicts Christ's soteriological work as deliverance from the bondage of slavery (or captivity) by means of a price paid,[53] while ἱλαστήριον derives from the cult.[54] Two "alien" metaphors have thus been introduced into the broader metaphoric imagery of the law court. Paul is not interested in metaphorical purity. He is concerned in bringing home his message effectively.[55] The metaphor of deliverance, "through Jesus Christ", indicates the basis for God's acquittal. The expiation metaphor, again, explains why God, while justifying sinners, does not jeopardize his justness. The cross of Jesus Christ enables him to justify undeserving sinners and, at the same time, retain his integrity as judge (3:26).

This passage agrees with 1:16–17 in its strong emphasis on faith as the means of appropriating God's acquittal. Πίστις and πιστεύω appear no less than eight times (3:22[bis], 25, 26, 27, 28, 30[bis]).[56]

What constitutes human guilt before God in this passage? We have already noted that Paul regards man's refusal to honour God for whom he is, as the basic sin. Rom 3:23 ties in with this. The καί which follows πάντες ἥμαρτον is epexegetic. Ὑστεροῦνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ explains the content of ἥμαρτον. In the light of the entire Rom 1:18–3:20, it is clear that τοῦ θεοῦ is an objective genitive. It is not the loss of man's glory which is at stake, but his failure to honour God (correctly, Schreiner 1998, 187). The judge now takes care of his own honour. By showing forth his own unique way of acquitting sinners, he vindicates himself as the righteous one (δίκαιος – v. 26).

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[53] See Büchsel (1942, 354–359); Schreiner (1998, 190–191).

[54] "Atonement" or "expiation" would, in my opinion, be appropriate translations. I cannot here go into the extended discussion of the reference, tradition history and meaning of ἱλαστήριον. But cf. Fryer (1979, 88–127); Breytenbach (1989, 166–168) and Haacker (1999, 90–91) for references to divergent positions.

[55] Cf Van der Watt (2000, 143–149) on the priority of the message in John.

[56] I cannot go into the protracted discussion whether the genitive in πίστις Ἰησοῦ (χριστοῦ) (3:22, 26) is objective or subjective. I can only register my conviction that the objective understanding fits the context best. But cf. Schreiner (1998, 181–186).

In the meantime, it has become clear that, as in 8:31–34, this court scenario flouts the regular canons of penal procedure. Up to Rom 3:20, Paul has argued that the whole of humanity stands guilty before God. Yet, here in 3:21ff, the judge acquits the guilty ones "freely by his grace" (δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι [v. 24]). A most unusual criterion is introduced: This judge operates with grace!

3.6. *Forensic Lexemes in the Rest of Romans*

We have found that no less than five crucial passages in Romans contain the imagery of a court session. Logically, our next step would be to investigate to what extent forensic terms function in the rest of Romans. This will, however, be out of the question. Only some salient points will receive attention. I start with the key forensic terms belonging to the δικ-group.

Δικαιόω occurs only in the first eight chapters of Romans. It is regularly used in a forensic sense, indicating the justifying verdict of the judge. In this sense it appears, apart from Rom 2:13 and 3:24–30, also in 3:20; 4:2, 5; 5:1, 9; 6:7 and, probably, 8:30. The only clear exception is 3:4 (a LXX quotation from Ps 50:6), where the appropriate equivalent would be "to vindicate". Significantly enough, it is the *judge* who is vindicated, as the parallel statement καὶ νικήσεις ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαι σε confirms.

Δικαιοσύνη appears a full 33 times in the first ten chapters of Romans, that is, almost throughout its argumentative section (Rom 1–11). In all these instances, it has forensic connotations.[57] The basic idea of justification (being acquitted/declared righteous by the judge) remains constant.[58] In certain instances it is more appropriate to translate it with "righteousness", but this righteousness is not an inherent ethical quality; it concerns the result of having been declared righteous/found not guilty by the divine judge.[59] This is especially

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[57] Apart from the five occurrences already discussed, the remaining 28 are: Rom 3:5; 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11(bis), 13, 22; 5:17, 21; 6:13, 16, 18, 19, 20; 8:10; 9:30(3x), 31; 10:3(3x), 4, 5, 6, 10. Text-critically the second occurrence of δικαιοσύνη in Rom 10:3 is uncertain.

[58] I have no doubt that Paul derived his understanding of δικαιοσύνη from his Jewish heritage, where צְדָקָה מִשְׁפָּט and צֶדֶק indicate Jahwe's covenant mercy and goodness as reflected i.a. in the Qumran documents (e.g. *1QH* 4:37; 7:19–20; *1QS* 11:3, 12). This understanding of δικαιοσύνη is also found in the LXX; cf. Schrenk (1935, 197–198).

[59] It is somewhat difficult to translate the compact quotation ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς

clear in Rom 6, where Paul rectifies a possible misunderstanding of his bold foregoing statements on the predominance of grace (Rom 5:15–21). Their new status of having been declared righteous puts a very important ethical responsibility on believers. They have to live up to it. Righteousness becomes a life principle. They are engaged in a *militia spiritualis* which requires the total application of all their faculties: παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὅπλα δικαιοσύνης τῷ θεῷ (6:13). Righteousness has become their new master (6:16). Therefore, they should serve him with everything they have (6:18–19).[60]

In the paraenetic section of Romans, δικαιοσύνη occurs only once (14:7). This is the only instance in Romans where it is undoubtedly non-forensic. Here it designates righteous living, which fits in well within the paraenetic context.

The adjective δίκαιος occurs less often.[61] We have seen that in 1:17 and 2:13 it refers to the condition of having been declared/found righteous by the heavenly judge. This is also the case in 5:19. These instances are quite significant, since the unmarked (standard) meaning of δίκαιος denotes a moral qualification. In 3:26 it indicates the "justness" of the judge who vindicates himself. In 3:10 an ethical quality is signified, but only as adjudicated by the divine judge. On the other hand, Rom 5:7 describes someone commonly accepted as a "good man". In 7:12, δικαία denotes the inherent moral quality of the commandments.

Space limitations do not allow an investigation of the other (possibly) relevant lexemes in the rest of Romans. I can only list them.[62] They are δικαίωσις (4:25; 5:18), ὀργή (3:5; 4:15; 5:9; 9:22[*bis*]; 12:19; 13:4–5), ἔπαινος (2:29 and 13:3), κρίνω (2:27; 3:4, 6, 7; 14:3), κρίμα (3:8; 5:16; 11:33; 13:2), κατακρίνω (8:3; 14:23), κατάκριμα (5:16, 18: 8:1), ἐνδικός (3:8), ὑπόδικος (3:19), ἐκδικέω (12:19), ἐκδίκησις (12:19), ἔκδικος (13:4), ἐλλογέω (5:13), συμμαρτυρέω (8:16; 9:1), παρίστημι (14:10), βῆμα (14:10).[63]

δικαιοσύνην in Rom 4:3 appropriately. It should probably be understood in the sense that God held Abraham's faith as *motivation* for his justification.

[60] For an extensive discussion, see Du Toit (1979).

[61] 1:17; 2:13; 3:10, 26; 5:7, 19; 7:12.

[62] Further research may identify even more relevant lexemes.

[63] For the ὑπερεντυγχάνειν of the Holy Spirit, cf. the discussion of ἐντυγχάνω in Rom 8:34 above.

To summarize: The preponderance of forensic metaphors in Romans, and especially in its argumentative part (Rom 1–11), is striking. Apart from the theme announcement in 1:16–17, the lexical choices in at least four other major passages indicate forensic settings, while forensic terms occur regularly almost throughout Rom 1–11. Structurally, the whole of Rom 1:18–11:36 is an unfolding of the forensic theme announced in 1:16–17.

In conclusion, some important questions linger in the mind. Why this profuse use of forensic imagery? Why this preponderance of the δικ-group, and especially of δικαιοσύνη? Why was δικαιοσύνη singled out as the theme of Romans? These questions require an answer.

4. Assembling the Building Blocks into a Soteriological Framework

It has often been recognized that Romans is not a compendium of Paul's theology. It rather concentrates on what is for him the essence of his gospel: soteriology. If our findings thus far are correct, it means that, in Romans, Paul has packaged his soteriology within a forensic setting.

Before trying to fit the scattered pieces together, the relation between the various trial scenarios needs to be clarified. We can accept that the trials in 1:16–17, 3:21–31 and 8:31–34 overlap. In all three instances believers are in view. In all three, they are justified by the divine judge. In all three, there is no reference to punishment. On the other hand, the two trial scenarios in 1:18–32 and 2:1–16 approximate one another, but there are also differences. The former indicates a judgement within history, the latter the final act of history. In both humans are judged according to their behaviour, but only in the latter are some found not guilty and rewarded. The former focuses on the judgement of the *gentiles*, while the latter covers both Jews and gentiles.

The main problem is the relation between 2:1–16 and the triad of 1:16–17, 3:21–31 and 8:31–34. In the former, judgement correlates with human behaviour: some are punished; others satisfy the demands of the judge (2:7, 10). In the latter, no one satisfies the demands of the judge. The point of departure is that humanity is totally in sin, and therefore nobody can be absolved (3:9–20). Believers are therefore only acquitted by grace, through faith in Christ.

A popular solution for this discrepancy is that 2:1–16 is hypothetical,[64] but this view has two weaknesses:

- It ignores the seriousness of Paul's presentation in 2:1–16.[65] He sketches this scenario realistically and sympathetically, although he eventually proves it to be (partially) flawed. Due to the corruption of mankind (3:9–20), its one leg, namely the one referring to a positive outcome (2:7, 10), has become dysfunctional.
- It does not take into consideration that Paul upholds the negative leg of this scenario in 2:17–3:20.

Two other solutions could be considered:

- Paul is convinced that the number of people who, on the basis of their works, will receive a positive verdict (2:7, 10), is indeed so small (cf. the climactic ἢ καί in 2:15) that he is fully entitled to speak of human sinfulness in absolute terms.
- Paul presents two divergent scenarios. In the one, human merit is the criterion for salvation; in the other, faith in Jesus Christ is decisive. Although he sketches the former in very realistic terms, the total corruption of mankind eventually disqualifies the positive leg of this scenario. The latter scenario, then, indicates God's new beginning.

Although these two possibilities are not necessarily mutually exclusive, within the context of Romans, the second one seems logically more convincing.

We can now assemble the pieces within a soteriological perspective. In doing so, the dominance of the forensic setting of Romans is taken into account. Underlying Paul's forensic metaphors is an integrated and integrating sub-structure, from where they derive their coherence. Also, Paul's non-forensic language should be understood against the backdrop of the forensic imagery.

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[64] E.g., among many, Moore (1998, 38).

[65] He would probably have equated it with the Jewish position (but one with which some non-Jews could identify). Note the strong correlation with the Jewish position in Rom 9–11. In both instances the decisive criterion is human works (2:7, 10, 15; 9:12, 32; 11:6); cf. also the metaphors of seeking and pursuing (2:7; 9:30–31; 10:3; 11:7).

For Paul, the almighty Creator-God is the eschatological judge of all people, Jew and non-Jew alike. Humanity is morally accountable to God. We must accept responsibility for our lives.

Sin constitutes guilt. Essentially, Paul depicts sin not in terms of individual wrongdoings, but in terms of the well-known honour-shame scheme. First and foremost, it is the refusal to honour God as God, the sin against the first two commandments, against the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer. And, because of his dishonouring God (1:21, 23, 25, 28; 2:23; 3:23), man has also debased himself (ἀτιμάζεσθαι – 1:24) and sin has proliferated.

From the perspective of merit, this judge shows no favouritism (2:5, 6, 11). Viewed from the same perspective, all of mankind should be punished (1:18–32; 2:19–3:20). But seen from the perspective of faith, those who have accepted the gospel are acquitted. They also have sinned heavily. They stand guilty before the judge. They deserve the *condemno vos*; but instead, they elatedly hear the judge's *absolvo*. This judge operates with the new norm of grace (3:24). How unbelievable and totally undeserved it may seem, believers experience him as unconditionally on their side (8:31). Has he not in Jesus Christ provided redemption (3:24) and atonement (3:25)? Has he not proven his love by handing over his only Son to be punished on their behalf (8:32)? These measures have restored the judicial equilibrium. The justness of the judicial system has not been compromised; as a matter of fact, the judge has been openly vindicated (3:26). However, there is one condition: justification has to be appropriated by faith.

Justification of the believers has restored their relationship with God. Therefore, they now have peace with him (5:1). They enjoy a new hope and they can confidently face all tribulations (5:2–5; 8:35–39). As a result of their acquittal, they have received a new identity and a new status. They are now God's δίκαιοι, a status which will be confirmed at the final judgement (cf. 5:19). Their new ethos is to live according to that status. Righteousness has become the guideline for their lives (Rom 6). As δίκαιοι, they now belong to a new, resurrection community. They are now living for, fighting for and serving God (Rom 6). Their new status implies even greater things: they now belong to God's family; they have become his children (Rom 8:14–17)!

From a time perspective, this trial setting has a present as well as a future aspect. The final trial will be at the end of time (2:1–16),

but the judge's activity manifests itself already within history. The gentiles are already being punished for dishonouring God in the course of history. Their punishment will be consummated in the eschaton. The believers are already experiencing their acquittal (3:24, 26; 5:1, 9; 8:33). Yet their final salvation will only take place at the end (5:10).

In order to evaluate the impact of Paul's choice of forensic imagery, we need to consider certain aspects of the historical and socio-cultural situation in which Romans was written. First of all, we know that Paul wrote this letter at a period when he had enough time to carefully consider his epistolary approach. He would have realized the risk of his undertaking. He was very sensitive to the fact that to the Romans he was not "their apostle"; he had not even visited them previously. For that reason, he downplays his apostolic self-consciousness (cf. especially 1:1–7), and elaborates on his long-felt desire to visit them (1:10–13). In fact, he applies all kinds of rhetorical devices to solicit their goodwill.[66] He is careful not to tread on their toes. A substantial part of them would have been slaves or ex-slaves. Immediately after stating that Christians should behave as "slaves of righteousness" (6:16–18), he hastens to say that he has only spoken metaphorically (6:19). Afraid that he might have been too prescriptive, he backs off in 15:14–15, stating that he has only reminded his audience of what they in fact already knew. This being the case, we can be certain that Paul's choice of forensic imagery would have been a very deliberate one. At the same time, we can suspect that the reason for this choice would lie within the social context of his addressees.

In considering Paul's adoption metaphors, Lyall asks "why . . .does this technical metaphor find its greatest use in the Epistle to the Romans?" (1984, 98; cf. 82). With a view to Paul's forensic language, and more specifically the predominance of δικαιοσύνη, we have even more reason to ask this question.

In order to determine an answer, it may be helpful to borrow a chapter from reception criticism. This literary approach alerts us to the importance of "implicatures", the "open spaces" in the text which are continuously being filled in by its readers. In announcing his δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ theme (1:16–17), Paul immediately places the idea

[66] See Du Toit (1989).

of the *iustitia Dei* on the table. This creates an implicature which his addressees would continuously fill in by means of associations triggered in their own minds. These associations would be those of the Roman justice system. During the reading/hearing process they would follow Paul's exposition of the *iustitia Dei* through the lenses of their own experience. They would fill in the "open spaces" by a continuous comparison between the *iustitia Dei* and the *iustitia romana* with which they had to reckon every day. The *iustitia romana* was expected to follow the rule of adequate retribution (Klostermann 1933), although in practice this was definitely not always the case. Since they belonged to the lower echelons of Roman society,[67] many of them would have suffered from the sharp edges of the Roman judicial system,[68] despite its extravagant praises by so many. They certainly would not have dreamed of any special favours. The *iustitia Dei*, on the other hand, has as its astonishing outcome divine acquittal (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ) for everyone, Jew and Greek alike, who puts his faith in God. How does this totally unconventional judiciary system really work? How will this amazing "good news" really unfold?

As has already been indicated, incongruity with expectations makes for much deeper impressions than compliance.[69] This is also true of Paul's forensic imagery. In God's judgement of the heathen nations (Rom 1:18–32) and of mankind in general (Rom 2:1–16), procedure runs according to expectations. The idea of adequate retribution (*suum cuique*) is upheld. But as far as his dealings with believers are concerned, this judge shocks all expectations.[70] He sides with the guilty; he takes painful measures to vouchsafe their acquittal; he shows mercy where he should have punished severely; he acquits unconditionally. Instead of judicial objectivity and equity, mercy is now the norm. The only requirement of the judge is that they should

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[67] Lampe 1989 presents an excellent and detailed analysis of the life situation of Roman Christians in the first three centuries. For an overview, see Du Toit (1998, 378–387).

[68] In practice, non-Romans, slaves and ex-slaves, and the lower classes in general, did not receive equal treatment before the law; see Chandler (1925, 51, 54).

[69] This point can also be illustrated from the parables: The a-typical in the behaviour of the good Samaritan creates the punch-line. The same is true of the father of the prodigal son; he does what even his own son did not ask or hope for.

[70] Naturally the Roman Christians were already acquainted with the gospel, although all might not have grasped it in its radical Pauline form. But even so, the specific way in which Paul presented it would have deepened their understanding and appreciation.

accept his offer. Instances of pardon were well-known in Roman legal practice, but these were spasmodic, eclectic, frequently qualified and conditional, and very often politically motivated.[71] A timeless, universal, and absolutely unconditional pardon like the one offered here in Romans, was totally unheard of.

Metaphors have their strengths and weaknesses. Paul's forensic imagery also has its limitations. As such, it can only depict sin as guilt before God. Other metaphors are necessary to portray, for example, its enslaving, estranging or defiling aspects. It also cannot describe the specific effect of Christ's salvific work. For that purpose, Paul had to resort to other metaphors like deliverance (Rom 3:24), atonement (3:25) and reconciliation (5:10–11). An additional weakness is that, apart from their new status as δίκαιοι and the imperative resulting from it, the forensic imagery focuses pre-eminently on believers' *entry* into the new community. It reveals very little about the nature of their new life in Christ.

On the other hand, Paul's forensic metaphors were eminently suited to highlight the sovereign activity of God, the radicality of sin and the even greater radicality of grace. In order to highlight the surprising otherness and the joy-bringing "goodness" of the good news to his Roman addressees, the apostle could scarcely have made a better choice. This was the language they would understand. *Ironical as it may seem, exactly by using forensic imagery, Paul completely delegalized the Christian message.* In God's gospel court room grace reigns supreme (Rom 5:20–21).

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[71] For the role of pardon in Roman penal law, see Mommsen (1899, 483–487, 928); Greenidge (1901, 519–520) (for the republican period); and especially Merkel 1881, although the latter concentrates primarily on the relative competence of the *populus*, the senate and the *princeps* in this regard. Remission and reduction of sentences were markedly more frequent in imperial times than in the republican period (Mommsen 1899, 484; Merkel 1881).

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CHAPTER FOUR

SALVATION AS REDEMPTION: THE USE OF "REDEMPTION" METAPHORS IN PAULINE LITERATURE

D. Francois Tolmie
University of the Free State

1. Introduction

One of the ways in which Paul expresses salvation in his letters is through the use of metaphors that could broadly be classified as "redemption" metaphors. In this regard, the most important examples are ἀγοράζειν (1 Cor 6:20 and 7:23), ἐξαγοράζειν (Gal 3:13; Gal 4:5), ἀπολύτρωσις (Rom 3:24, 8:23 and 1 Cor 1:30). He also uses ἐλευθερία/ἐλευθεροῦν/ἐλεύθερος in several places in his letters. The aim of this study is to discuss the way in which Paul uses these metaphors, in particular to determine the focus of each metaphor within its context. Furthermore, the particular notion of salvation as conveyed by each metaphor will be discussed. The study begins with a brief survey of the research on Paul's use of these metaphors.

2. A Brief Survey of Research on Redemption Metaphors in the Twentieth Century

Adolf Deißmann should be mentioned first. He links Paul's use of redemption metaphors to the practice of sacral manumission as it was practised in antiquity (Deißmann 1925, 135). According to this practice, a slave would deposit the money for his/her manumission at the temple. Then the owner of the slave would take him/her to the temple, where the slave was "purchased" by the god when the money deposited by the slave was given to the owner. As a result, the slave would become the "property" of the god and she/he would be free.

Werner Elert (1947, 267) rejects Deißmann's interpretation of the redemption metaphors on several grounds. Firstly, he points out that

in sacral manumission the slave actually freed him-/herself, since the money used to "buy" the slave was deposited by the slave beforehand. This means that the "purchase" of the slave by the god was only a fictitious transaction. According to Elert, this fact undermines the so-called analogy between sacral manumission and Pauline use of the metaphor, since Paul presupposes that human beings are totally unfit to redeem themselves. Furthermore, Elert points out the linguistic problems: the word πρίασθαι, which is used in the inscriptions that Deißmann uses, is never used in the New Testament; on the other hand, the words used by Paul (ἐξαγοράζειν and ἀγοράζειν) are never used in the inscriptions. In fact, as Elert points out, the only linguistic parallel between the inscriptions and Pauline literature is the word τιμή.

According to Elert (1947, 267), it would be better to view Paul's use of redemption metaphors against the background of the practice of *redemptio ab hostibus* as reflected in Roman law. According to Roman law, anyone captured during a war became a slave and lost all personal rights, because he/she became the property of the victor. This situation could be reversed legally by the *redemptio ab hostibus*: when someone else could raise the money to purchase the slave from his/her owner, the slave could be freed. In such a case the slave was freed, but remained in debt (*in potestate*) to the person who freed him/her until the money was returned.

William Linn Westermann (1948, 55–64) attempts to answer the question as to where Paul got the idea of portraying converts to Christianity as slaves of God. He agrees with Deißmann that the records of manumissions in the inscriptions at Delphi and in Egypt offer the best way of understanding the origin of this metaphor. However, in the end Westermann proposes a dual source for Paul's idea of the slaves of God. He distinguishes between what he calls the "external trappings" of the metaphor and its "inner spirit" (Westermann 1948, 62). According to him, the "external trappings", that is all the details presupposed by the metaphor and the vocabulary used, came from the Greek notion of παραμονή. However, the "inner spirit" of the metaphor came from Paul's Jewish faith and background, which in turn, were derived from the total Semitic pattern of religious thought behind the Jewish ideals, according to which people could be dedicated for lifelong service to G/god(s).

Franz Bömer (1957–1963) published a four volume study of his research on religions of the slaves in Greek and Rome. The second

volume (1961) is devoted to "Die sogenannte sakrale Freilassung in Griechenland und Rom", and in this volume Bömer rejects Deißmann's proposal on several grounds, describing it as "mit einer nicht geringen Zahl unhaltbarer Konstruktionen, größter Ungenauigkeiten und leider nicht wenigen ganz schweren Fehlinterpretationen belastet" (Bömer 1961, 132). Of the arguments that Bömer raises against Deißmann's hypothesis, the following three are to my mind the most important:

- Paul uses the word ἀγοράζειν in the sense of "buying on the market" and never in the sense of "buying freedom".
- According to the inscriptions, the freed slaves were not regarded as manumitted by a god, but by private persons. Furthermore, they were never regarded as both slaves and freed persons, and the expression δοῦλος Θεοῦ is never used in the inscriptions.
- The notion of παραμονή is described by Bömer as nothing but a system of suppression, and he believes that if Deißmann is correct that Paul used it as a parallel for Christian freedom, it could only mean that Paul was rather ignorant ("wirklich schlecht beraten"—Bömer 1961, 32) in this regard.

Bömer (1961, 33) himself proposes that Paul's notion of redemption should be explained against the background of Oriental notions of sacral and profane manumission.

In his study of the New Testament concept "Loskauf", *Elpidius Pax* (1962, 239–278) basically agrees with Bömer's criticism of Deißmann. Of the various arguments that Pax uses against Deißmann, the following two are to my mind the most important:

Firstly, in his in-depth comparison of the use the concept "redemption" in Pauline literature and the rest of the Greek world, Pax proves beyond doubt that Deißmann's proposal that the use of the metaphor in the New Testament should be explained in terms of sacral manumission, is unacceptable. Pax substantiates this with the following six arguments:

- In sacral manumission the focus was on the rights of the owner, but in the New Testament the focus is on Christ as the "buyer".
- The previous owner is never mentioned in the New Testament.
- The situation of παραμονή, according to which some freed slaves in practice remained bound to their previous owners, is not known in the New Testament.

- The final goal of sacral manumission is liberty, that is, "to belong to oneself", whereas the New Testament view of the matter is that the goal of redemption is to belong to Christ.
- In sacral manumission no personal relationship exists between the slave, the god and the owner. In fact, the god is usually totally absent and there is almost never any indication of any thanksgivings to the god after the act of manumission. This differs totally from the context in which the metaphor is used in the New Testament.
- The linguistic data, and even the syntax, show that there is no analogy between the use of the concept in the New Testament and in the Greek texts. In this regard, Pax provides a long list showing that there is no overlapping between the New Testament and the Greek texts.

Secondly, Pax himself attempts to identify the source of Paul's use of the metaphor. After a lengthy discussion, he concludes that the roots of the redemption metaphor should be traced back to the Old Testament, in particular to the liberation from Egypt, an event which was viewed as corresponding to the various ways of manumission of slaves in Paul's time. However, Pax also emphasises that Paul developed and changed the contemporary notions of manumission in light of the death and resurrection of Christ. For example, the notion of manumission itself moved to the background and the focus shifted to Christ, the "buyer", who takes the initiative. The best word that Paul could find to indicate this new emphasis was ἀγοράζειν. It was deliberately chosen, since it functioned in a neutral way in everyday speech for buying any object, not only slaves. Paul filled it with new content: he uses it in the passive to emphasise the fact of being bought by Christ, and as composite (ἐξαγοράζειν) to emphasise God's active role in the saving event.

In his dissertation, *Wilfrid Haubeck* (1985) also focuses on "Loskauf" as a concept in the Pauline literature. His aim is not to introduce a new perspective on the matter, but rather to substantiate Pax's view thoroughly. This he achieves through conducting a detailed exegesis of the notion of redemption in the Old Testament, the Septuagint and in early Judaism. He concludes that both Deißmann and Elert are wrong in their interpretation of the background of the Pauline metaphors (Haubeck 1985, 292), and that their background should be searched primarily in the Old Testament (in particular,

the fact that Israel was redeemed by God and became his property), and early Judaism (in particular the emphasis in some rabbinic writings that God would redeem Israel because He loved them and was merciful to them).

Although the focus of *Dale Martin*'s (1990) study is slightly different from that of this study, it represents such an important development in the research on this matter that it should be mentioned. In his study Martin attempts to explain how it was possible that slavery could be used by early Christians to portray something positive (salvation), in particular why anyone would want to be called a slave of Christ (Martin 1990, xiv). For the issue discussed in this study I wish to highlight two important aspects of his study:

Firstly, Martin (1990, xvii) points out what he calls the *genetic fallacy* in the explanation of the metaphorical use of the notion of slavery in earlier studies. This refers to the fact that scholars were under the impression that they had adequately explained the use of the metaphor when they had "proved" its origin, for example that it came from Old Testament usage or Hellenistic/Eastern religious or political language. Quite correctly, Martin points out that this is not enough and that a better approach would be to explain how the metaphor of slavery actually worked for the people who used it. Thus one has to explain the use of the metaphor in the context of the Graeco-Roman city.

Secondly, Martin stresses the *complexity* of ancient slavery. In the first chapter, Martin (1990, 1–49) provides a detailed explanation of this issue. He shows that, although many slaves had a terrible life and were mistreated, there were nevertheless some slaves who found themselves in better circumstances. For example, some of them were allowed by their owners to have families of their own and some of them were even allowed to own their own money. With regard to the jobs that slaves had, Martin shows that they occupied many different jobs and that there were recognised levels of hierarchy in the jobs that slaves could occupy. Martin also shows that slaves functioned within the well-known patron-client structure of antiquity with its obligations and benefits, and that this created possibilities for "upward mobility" of slaves within the social structure. Against this background, Martin explains the fact that Paul called himself a "slave of Christ", not as an indication of humility, but as indicative of his authority as Christ's agent and spokesperson.

3. The Approach to be Followed in This Study

What can we learn from the brief survey of research on Paul's use of redemption metaphors above? To my mind, the aspect that stands out most clearly is that one should be wary of any attempt to identify the "origin" of the redemption metaphors with absolute certainty. Two reasons can be provided:

Firstly, it is rather difficult to "prove" the origin of a metaphor. In the discussion above it has been indicated how scholars "proved" that the redemption metaphors originated in a certain way, only to be 'proved' wrong by other scholars at a later stage. This should make one wary of similar attempts in this regard.

Secondly, even if a scholar succeeded in "proving" that the redemption metaphors originated in a certain way, they usually had to leave room either for other possible influences or for some aspects in Paul's use that do not fit the picture. For example, Büchsel (1957a, 127), who follows Deißmann's interpretation, had to point out that Paul used the metaphor not for indicating a fictional payment, as in the case of the Delphic god. Another example: Haubeck (1985, 294, note 13), who follows and substantiates Pax's interpretation, has to concede in a footnote that, although he views the Old Testament and early Judaism as the source of the Pauline redemption metaphors, the contemporary ways of manumission in Paul's time functioned as the background for Paul's use of the metaphor.

Thus, if I *must* indicate a possible place for the "origin" of Paul's redemption metaphors, the most natural place that comes to mind would be the social setting within which Paul used these metaphors. In a world where more or less a third of all people were slaves (Bartchy 1992, 67), and where people were bought and sold in the same way as we nowadays buy and sell motor cars, the notion of buying, selling or liberating people seems to fit naturally into that of slavery. However, due to the complexity of slavery (see next section), it would be unwise to link the metaphors to a particular aspect of slavery, for example a particular form of manumission or particular aspects of Roman law. A better approach would be to attempt to really understand slavery as a phenomenon within the context of the New Testament world and to look at each redemption metaphor within its textual context to see which aspects are emphasised by the metaphor.

What about the Old Testament as a possible background for the use of Paul's redemption metaphors? We are all aware of the fact that Paul knew and used the Old Testament extensively, and thus it would only be reasonable to assume that the way in which the Old Testament reflects physical and spiritual redemption would have influenced his ideas in this regard extensively. (See, for example the discussion of λύτρον by Haubeck 1985, 361–362.) However, since most of the notions about slavery in the Old Testament overlap with similar notions in the New Testament world, it would be difficult to prove that Paul's usage of the redemption metaphors should be linked exclusively, or even predominantly, to the Old Testament.

Thus, the approach followed in this study is based on the assumption that the conceptual background of Paul's use of redemption metaphors was the well-known phenomenon of slavery. However, the purpose of the study is not to identify the possible origin of Paul's redemption metaphors. The focus will fall on the way in which these metaphors function within their particular contexts. As Booth (1981, 52) quite correctly points out with regard to the use of metaphors, exactly what is being communicated by a metaphor is always context-dependent and therefore the full meaning of a metaphor can never be determined without reference to the rhetorical situation within which it is used. Thus, the aim of this study is to analyse the use of Paul's redemption metaphors within their various contexts, to determine which aspect(s) of salvation is (are) highlighted by its use. This is done in order to indicate the underlying notion of salvation portrayed by the metaphor.

A last aspect to be pointed out concerns the way in which metaphors function. One of the problematic aspects in a study on the use of metaphors in any form of discourse, is that metaphors tend to become worn out by repetition. The first time someone was called a pig by someone else, the metaphor must have been striking, but after it had been said hundreds of times, no-one experiences it as a striking way of depicting someone's behaviour any more. It has become a "dead" or "dormant" metaphor (Perelman 1982, 122; see also Brooks & Warren 1961, 274–280). This also holds true of metaphors that are used in religious discourse: when they are coined and used for the first time, they usually present such a striking perspective on the issue at stake, that they function very effectively. Over time, they tend to lose their effect, sometimes to such an extent that they become

part of the "normal" religious speech. In the case of biblical metaphors, it is rather difficult to determine after almost 2000 years in which stage of development a metaphor was when it was used by an author. In the discussion of Paul's redemption metaphors further on, this aspect will be discussed in more detail, but, in general, it could be said at this stage that it seems as if none of the redemption metaphors used by him would have been experienced by his readers as striking or freshly coined. On the other hand, it does not seem as if they were dormant or even totally dead at the stage that he used them. If this is the case, we may expect that some of the metaphorical potential of the various metaphors could still be released by the way in which he uses them within his arguments. At least we can scrutinise his use of each metaphor, and in that way try to determine as best as possible the way in which it functions within its context. However, before we turn to that, a few very brief remarks about slavery as a phenomenon in the New Testament world need to be made.

4. Some Aspects of Slavery in The New Testament World

Many detailed studies of slavery in the Graeco-Roman world have already been published. See, for example, Hopkins (1978), Brockmeyer (1979), Laub (1982) and Bradley (1987). For the purpose of this study, the following brief remarks on slavery in the Roman world should be made (see Bartchy 1992, 66–73):

It is important to be aware of the differences between modern forms of slavery (as practised in the New World) and the way in which it functioned in the first century CE. Bartchy (1992, 66) summarises it aptly:

> Central features that distinguishes 1st century slavery from that later practiced in the New World are the following: racial factors played no role; education was greatly encouraged (some slaves were better educated than their owners) and enhanced a slave's value; many slaves carried out sensitive and highly responsible social functions; slaves could own property (including other slaves!); their religious and cultural traditions were the same as those of the freeborn; no laws prohibited public assembly of slaves; and (perhaps above all) the majority of urban and domestic slaves could legitimately anticipate being emancipated by the age of 30.

How did people become slaves? Before the first century CE, most slaves were captured during wars or kidnapped by pirates. However, in the first century CE the number of wars declined and female slaves that bore children for their owners were the primary source of slaves. Other sources of slaves in the first century CE were people that sold themselves into slavery (for example, to pay debts), people that sold their children as slaves (for example, to pay debts or to improve the child's situation), people that were enslaved by their creditors, and the exposure of infants who, if found alive, could be raised as slaves. In these various ways, a steady supply of slaves was guaranteed, so that about a third of all people living in urban areas were slaves.

Negative connotations associated with slavery: The most important aspect in this aspect was, of course, the fact that people lost their liberty and were regarded as someone else's property. Furthermore, slaves had no legal rights of their own, but were totally under the legal control of the *pater familias*. Since slaves had no legal rights, they could be abused or maltreated by their owners as they pleased. Slaves could be beaten, were regarded as sexually available to their owners, could be tortured to verify their testimony in courts of law, and were subject to corporal punishment.

Positive connotations associated with slavery: Unbelievable as it may sound to modern ears, there were some benefits associated with slavery. One of the basic benefits of slavery was that slaves were provided with food and living quarters. In a world full of poverty this was no small benefit. Since slaves represented an economic investment, owners usually made sure that their slaves were kept in good physical condition. Furthermore, slaves formed part of a particular *oikos*, and therefore they "shared" the individual honour and status of their owners, which in some cases would have been regarded a benefit. In particular, if the slave was freed at a later stage, it could have been regarded a benefit to be a freedman from a particular *oikos*. In general, it should be said that the kind of life that a slave led was dependent on her/his owner. Some owners were quite lenient towards their slaves, allowing them to own money, marry, share in the profit, and even own their own slaves. In such a situation the loss of liberty was eased by the fact that the slave had some "rights".

Manumission: Although owners were never legally forced by law to free their slaves, it became a regular practice, and therefore most slaves looked forward to their manumission. This could be achieved in various ways. The owner could decide to free a slave as a reward

for good and loyal service rendered to the owner. Sometimes it was stipulated in the will of the owner that some of his slaves were to be freed. Sometimes slaves were freed by their owners, because they were not able to do enough work any more and thus represented a financial loss.

Furthermore, slaves could be freed by means of a financial transaction: if they (or someone else) could raise enough money, liberty could be bought. It is important to realise that this was viewed as a business transaction: the owner had to be compensated for his loss, for example, by receiving more than he paid for the slave in the first place, or enough to replace the slave with another one. Slaves who were freed, were called freedmen/-women and remained linked to the *oikos* to which they belonged, and were legally bound to continue many of their former duties after manumission. In general, it is important to realise that manumission was a normal occurrence in the world in which the New Testament originated. As Bartchy (1992, 71) points out, most urban slaves could look forward to their manumission and only a few slaves are known to have reached old age in slavery, because most had been released in their 30s, 40s or 50s.

This very brief survey shows the complexity of the phenomenon of slavery in the world of the New Testament. Against this background we can now turn to the individual Pauline metaphors that refer to slavery/redemption from slavery.

5. Ἀγοράζειν As Metaphor in 1 Corinthians

In 1 Corinthians Paul uses ἀγοράζειν twice, namely in 1 Cor 6:20 and 7:23. In the first instance it is mentioned towards the end of an argument in which Paul warns his readers not to go to prostitutes (1 Cor 6:12–20). In verses 12–14, he discusses the limits of Christian liberty. This is followed by verses 15–18, in which he warns his readers to be aware of the fact that their bodies are part of Christ and therefore may not become one with that of a prostitute. In verses 19–20 he urges them to glorify God by means of their bodies, which are described as temples of the Spirit. The last part of his argument is structured as follows:

Verse 19: Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit
You do not belong to yourself

Verse 20: Because you were bought for a price
Therefore you should praise God in your body!

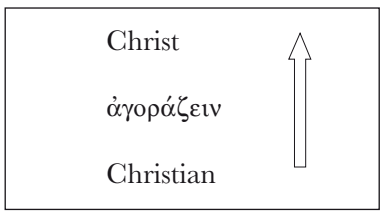
In verse 20 Paul uses ἀγοράζειν metaphorically in a statement that is introduced rather abruptly into the argument, in order to motivate the previous as well as the following statement. The word ἀγοράζειν normally means "to buy", but is used here in a metaphorical sense. To my mind, the most natural background for its metaphorical use here is slavery, in particular the buying and selling of people as slaves. However, it should be noted that Paul provides only a minimum of information. He does not indicate the subject of the transaction; we may infer that it might be Christ or God. He does not indicate when it happened; we may speculate that he is referring to the crucifixion, or, in a broader sense, to the coming of Christ. He does not indicate the price; we may speculate that he refers to the fact that Christ gave his life. However, the fact of the matter is that Paul is not interested in these possibilities when he uses ἀγοράζειν metaphorically. He is only interested in one aspect of the metaphor, namely that anyone who has been bought by someone else, becomes the property of that person. Thus the focus of the metaphor is definitely not on manumission or even on "the status-improvement meaning of slavery to Christ" (Martin 1990, 63). Interpretations such as these take as point of departure the beneficial aspects of being bought by Christ/God, whereas Paul focuses on something else, namely the idea of ownership: that they belong to someone else, that they have become the property of someone else, thus a change of owner. Thus, the focus is not on the change in status, but on what the obligations being bought have for Christians.

Paul uses ἀγοράζειν again in 1 Cor 7:23—in a section summarised aptly by Klauck (1984, 54) as "Gottes Ruf—befreiend und verpflichtend." Paul advises his readers to stay in the state in which they were called to be Christians: those who were uncircumcised when called should stay uncircumcised, those who were slaves, should not let it bother them, because they are freedmen in the Lord, and those who were free should keep in mind that they are slaves of Christ. Martin (1990, 65–66) quite correctly draws attention to the fact that Paul's advice to the slaves is based on the notion of status improvement: although they are physically slaves, they are freed persons of Christ. Since freed persons had a higher status than slaves, this implies a status improvement. Furthermore, the slaves (as freed persons) are linked to a different household, that of Christ. This

represents a further status improvement. With regard to Paul's advice to those who are free, Martin (1990, 65) shows that Paul's advice to them actually represents a lowering in status: they should consider themselves not as free, but as slaves of Christ. This represents a considerable lowering in status for the free people. As Martin points out, Paul even places them on a lower level than the slaves! The slaves are regarded as freed persons in Christ's household, whereas the free people are regarded as slaves in Christ's household.

How does Paul use the metaphor ἀγοράζειν here? Directly after the advice to the free people that they should consider themselves as slaves of Christ, Paul continues: τιμῆς ἠγοράσθητε· μὴ γίνεσθε δοῦλοι ἀνθρώπων. Thus the metaphor is used more or less in the same way as in 1 Cor 6:23, that is, to signify the fact that they are the *property* of Christ and the *obligations* resulting from being bought by Christ.

The way in which ἀγοράζειν functions metaphorically in 1 Cor 6:23 and 7:23 may thus be represented schematically as follows:



6. Ἐξαγοράζειν As Metaphor in Galatians

In his attempt to persuade his Galatian readers not to follow the advice of his opponents, Paul does his utmost to convince them that "his" gospel is sanctioned by God, and thus should be followed by the Galatians. Almost halfway through his argument he uses the metaphor ἐξαγοράζειν for the first time (Gal 3:13) and then again a chapter later (Gal 4:5).

In the first instance the metaphor is used towards the end of an argument, which can be demarcated as Gal 3:6–14. Paul's rhetorical strategy in this section can be summarised as the use of an example (that of Abraham) and arguments based on the authority of Scripture to counter the Scriptural arguments of his opponents. The argument can be outlined as follows:

In verses 6–9, Paul interprets proof texts from Genesis in his own way in order to refute the way in which his opponents interpret Abraham. According to Paul, Gen 15:6 shows that Abraham was justified because he believed, and this indicates that those who believe are children of Abraham. Furthermore, Paul argues that God promised Abraham in Gen 12:3 and 18:18 that all nations would be blessed in him. This means that all who believe will be blessed in/with Abraham. In verse 10, he uses Deut 27:26 as proof text to show that "those who are of the works of the law" are cursed, thereby vilifying his opponents as people that are cursed by God and threatening his audience that they will come under a curse themselves if they follow the example of the opponents. In verses 11–12, he uses proof texts from Hab 2:4 and Lev 18:5, in order to refute the notion that justification can be achieved by the law. In verse 13, he uses Deut 21:23 to prove that Christ died accursed. In the accompanying statement, he uses the traditional Christian interpretation of Christ's death (that He died to redeem human beings), emphasising the notion of redemption from the curse of the law. In verse 14, Paul uses two co-ordinated ἵνα-clauses to indicate the benefits of Christ's death.

For our purpose, the Scriptural argument that he uses in verse 10 is important. From Deut 27:26 he deduces that "those from the law" are under a curse. To my mind the expression "those from the law" refers to those people who view the keeping of the law as the foundation of their relationship with God. According to Paul, all people who follow this option are cursed. In verse 13, he returns to the notion of curse when he introduces the redemption metaphor:

> Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρα . . .

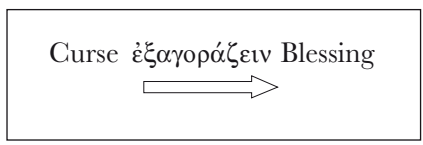
Regarding the way in which Paul uses the redemption metaphor here, the following is important:

It could well be that he is using a well known *traditional Christian confession* that Christ died in order to redeem "us" (Becker 1981, 381; Betz 1979, 149; Longenecker 1990, 122). However, it is difficult to prove this with certainty and even more difficult to reconstruct the wording of the traditional confession. Anyway, whatever the origin of the idea might have been, we may assume that Paul uses it because he agrees with it and views it as relevant for his argument at this stage.

The *subject* of the process of redemption is identified as Christ, and the process of redemption is linked to the death of Christ. This is clear from the fact that the event of redemption is linked to Christ having become a "curse", which is motivated by quoting Deut 21:23, a text which originally did not refer to crucifixion, but which was interpreted in early Judaism as an indication that a crucified person was cursed by God (Sänger 1994, 283–284).

The *object* of redemption is "us"—here, to my mind, best understood in an inclusive sense as "all of us who believe in Christ" (Smit 1984, 218). The *situation* from which the redemption occurred, is described as ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου, a statement referring to the earlier one in verse 10, according to which those who are "from' the law are under the curse because they do not perform the things required by the law.

Regarding Paul's employment of the metaphor here, it is best understood against the background of slavery, in particular the possibility that a slave's liberty could be "bought" by someone. However, although the metaphor in itself might have carried the overtones of manumission from slavery and liberty, it is important to take note of the fact that Paul does not emphasise either the aspect of slavery or liberty in this context. Instead, the *effect* achieved by the process of redemption is described in terms of a movement from being *cursed* to being *blessed*. In other words, he integrates the metaphor into the larger argumentative context in which the opposition between curse and blessing plays a significant role (see verses 8–10 and 14). Thus, the underlying notion in Paul's use of ἐξαγοράζειν to indicate salvation can be identified as a *radical (positive) status reversal*. Schematically it can be represented as follows:



In Gal 4:1–7, Paul's dominant rhetorical strategy is to use an analogy to contrast the difference between spiritual slavery and sonship of God, in order to remind the Galatians that they are sons of God and not spiritual slaves. In verses 1–2, a situation that would have been well known to his audience is described: a father dies and leaves everything to his son, the heir. However, since the son is still a

minor, his heritage is managed by guardians and administrators until he reaches the age set by his father. In verse 3, Paul begins with the application of the analogy. Just like the heir falls under the authority of guardians and administrators, "we" once were slaves ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα. Normally the expression στοιχεῖα referred to the basic elements that were assumed to be the building blocks of the cosmos, namely fire, water, earth and air (see, for example, Blinzler 1961, 429–443; Rusam 1992, 119–125). However, Paul does not use it in this sense, but in a figurative way to denote all religious practices that are elementary and restrictive. In short, the *inferiority* of τὰ στοιχεῖα in comparison to faith is the main notion that he wishes to convey. It should also be noted that he deliberately chooses a concept that would be wide enough to cover both Judaism and other forms of religion (Hartman 1993, 146).

In verses 4–5, Paul describes the change that had been brought about by God's initiative. He decided to set "us" free. This He achieved by means of his Son, who freed those under the law, in order for "us" to be adopted as sons. Paul expresses this as follows:

> . . . ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ, ἵνα τὴν υἱοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν.

With regard to the way in which he employs ἐξαγοράζειν as metaphor here, the following should be highlighted:

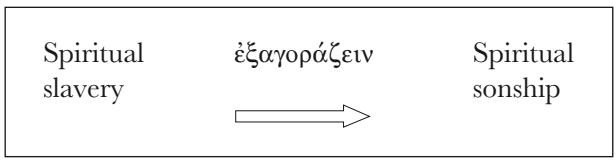
As in the case of Gal 3:13, it has been pointed out by scholars (see, for example, Hahn 1963, 315; Fuller 1978, 40–42 and Schenke 1990, 39–340) that a pre-Pauline Christological *tradition* or perhaps even a formula behind verses 4–5 can be detected. However, since he embeds it within his own argument, it is difficult to reconstruct it with absolute certainty.

The *subject* of the redemption is once again Christ, now identified as the "Son", probably because Paul wants to link Christ's Sonship to the υἱοθεσία of the believers. (This may also be the reason why he describes the Spirit as the "Spirit of his Son".) The act of redemption is not linked in particular to the death of Christ, but in a more general sense to the "sending of the Son".

The *object* of redemption is identified as "those under the law", which, if read together with the expression ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου ἤμεθα δεδουλωμένοι in verse 3, depicts the desperate situation from which people had to be redeemed, as spiritual slavery. Thus, here he specifically employs the metaphor within the context of slavery. However, the *change* brought about by the redemption is not described

in terms of a contrast between spiritual slavery and spiritual freedom, but as a movement from spiritual slavery to spiritual sonship, an excellent example of what Martin (1990, 30) describes as "slavery as upward mobility".

The underlying idea in Paul's use of the metaphor to indicate salvation can once again be identified as a *radical (positive) status reversal*, now expressed not in terms of the movement from being cursed to being blessed, but from spiritual slavery to spiritual sonship:

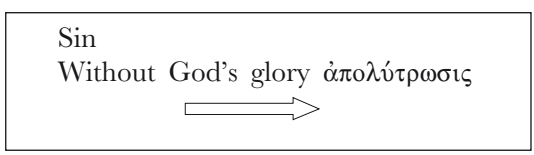


7. Ἀπολύτρωσις As Metaphor in Romans and 1 Corinthians

Paul uses ἀπολύτρωσις in Rom 3:23, 8:23 and 1 Cor 1:30. (It is also used in the deutero-Pauline Col 1:14 and Eph 1:7, 14; 4:30). In Rom 3:23 and 1 Cor 1:30 it is used to indicate a present reality, and in Rom 8:23 an eschatological reality. The use of ἀπολύτρωσις to indicate a present reality will be discussed first. Since Rom 3:23 contains more information for interpreting the metaphor than 1 Cor 1:30, the discussion will focus on its use in Romans. In Romans, ἀπολύτρωσις occurs for the first time in Rom 3:21–26, a passage that is central to the development of Paul's argument. In Rom 1:18–3:20, Paul first explains the desperate situation in which humankind finds itself. Rom 3:21 (νυνὶ δέ . . .) brings the turning point: the good news of what God has done on behalf of humankind, namely that He has established those who believe in Christ in a relationship with Himself. It seems highly likely that Paul uses pre-Pauline material in verses 24–26a (see the discussions by Michel 1978, 150; Stuhlmacher 1992, 290; Fitzmyer 1993, 342–342). Apart from ἀπολύτρωσις Paul uses several other metaphors in verses 24–25:

> God *justifies* humankind
> through the *redemption* which is in Christ Jesus
> whom God set forth as an *expiation*,
> through faith,
> in his *blood* . . .

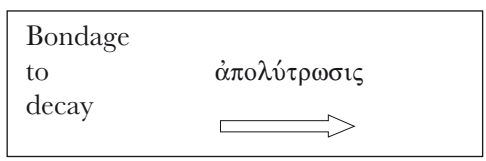
The fact that various metaphors are used alongside one another to indicate the salvation brought about by Christ's death ("blood") indicates that, in spite of the possible overlap between the metaphors, each one depicts salvation from a certain perspective. Which perspective is portrayed by ἀπολύτρωσις? Originally the word indicated the buying back of a slave or captive, thereby making him/her free through the payment of ransom (See Bauer 1988, 193 for several examples). According to Bauer, the word is used in a more general and figurative sense in the New Testament, namely as release or redemption. This is disputed by some New Testament scholars, who would like to understand it in the sense of the payment of a ransom. Two examples: Haubeck (1985, 363) concedes that no ransom is mentioned in its current context, but points to 1 Cor 6:20 and 7:23 where a price is mentioned, from which he deduces that in Rom 3 ἀπολύτρωσις should be understood as also indicating ransom. Fitzmyer also (1993, 348) interprets it as meaning "emancipated or ransomed humanity from its bondage to sin." However, to my mind, the arguments provided by Büchsel (1957b, 357) to prove the opposite are convincing. He points out that none of the ἀπολύτρωσις passages in the New Testament contain any express reference to ransom. Furthermore, he argues that it would be impossible to append the idea of a ransom in the case of the eschatological passages (Luke 21:28, Rom 8:23, Eph 1:14; 4:30). Thus, it seems best to assume that the original sense of the word was watered down in biblical use so that only a very general sense of "freedom" or "redemption" remained. (See also Käsemann 1980, 90 and Schmithals 1988, 125.) Since the notions of slavery and ransom are not explicitly functioning in the metaphor anymore, one should classify ἀπολύτρωσις as a dormant metaphor, used by Paul to indicate "spiritual freedom" in a general sense. Nevertheless, even as a dormant metaphor, it is used to indicate the radical status reversal effected by Christ. In this case he focuses on the situation from which Christ liberated those who believe. In verse 23, it is indicated as a situation of sin and a lack of the glory of God. Thus, the use of ἀπολύτρωσις in this passage could be represented schematically as follows:



In Rom 8:23, Paul again uses ἀπολύτρωσις in the sense of freedom, but now in an eschatological context. In verse 18 he begins with the firm conviction that the present suffering will be totally outweighed by the future glory. This is followed by a description of the situation of creation: because it was subjected to futility, it is looking forward with eager expectation to the revelation of the children of God when it will be set free from its slavery to decay. In verse 24, Paul again focuses on the believers, now described as "we who have the first fruits of the Spirit," who also "groan" and look forward, υἱοθεσίαν ἀπεκδεχόμενοι, τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν. Both υἱοθεσία and ἀπολύτρωσις have been used earlier in Rom to denote the present state of salvation (see Rom 8:15 and 3:23), but are now used to denote eschatological salvation. In the case of ἀπολύτρωσις, the freedom that Paul looks forward to is described as ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν. This refers to "freedom of our bodies", not "freedom from our bodies", as Lietzmann (1971, 85) interprets it. This should be understood, in light of the description of the situation of creation in verse 21 (ἡ δουλεία τῆς φθορᾶς), as a reference to a freedom from an existence of decay and temptation. Schlier (1979, 266) describes the current situation in which believers find themselves, aptly:

> . . . dieser Leib als versuchlicher und sterblicher, der immer von seiner Vergangenheit her bedroht ist, gegen den Geist und damit gegen die Gabe des von Gott gerechtfertigten und geheiligten Lebens sich zu erheben.

Thus, the use of ἀπολύτρωσις in Rom 8:23 can be depicted as follows:



8. Ἐλευθεροῦν and Cognates

Paul uses ἐλευθερεῖν/ἐλευθερία/ἐλεύθερος in several places in his letters; not only to indicate salvation, but also in other contexts. For example, in Gal 3:28 it is used to indicate social status, and in 1 Cor 9:1, 19a to indicate financial independence (Vollenweider 1997, 503). When it is used to indicate salvation, it overlaps mostly with

what has been discussed in the sections above, and therefore I shall only present a brief overview of the way in which it functions as an indication of salvation in Galatians and Romans.

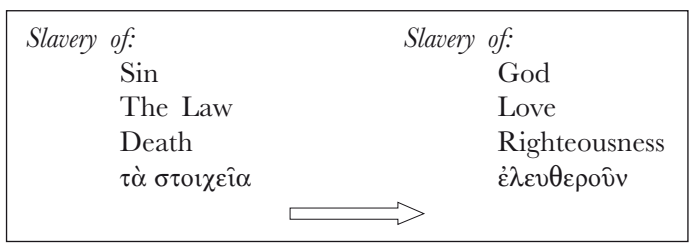
With regard to the Letter to the Galatians, the notion of freedom is contrasted with the notion of spiritual slavery. As pointed out above in the discussion of ἐξαγοράζειν in Gal 4:1–7, Paul views the situation of humankind as spiritual slavery, in particular, as spiritual slavery to τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου and/or the law. From this situation they have been redeemed by Christ (Gal 4:5). The statements with regard to freedom in the rest of the letter should be understood against the same background. For example, if he says in Gal 2:4 that the "false brethren" slipped in to "spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus" and wanted to "enslave us", he is thinking of freedom in terms of freedom from slavery to the law. Another example: if Paul reminds his readers in Gal 5:1 that Christ has set them free, he is still thinking of freedom from slavery to the law. This is clear from the warning that follows directly upon this statement, namely not to submit again to a yoke of slavery. To summarise: when Paul uses the notion of freedom in Galatians in order to indicate salvation, he thinks of it primarily in terms of freedom of slavery to the law (so, correctly, Dunn 1998, 435; *contra* Jones 1987, 70–109).

However, it should also be pointed out that Paul does not view freedom brought about by Christ as freedom in the sense of being one's own master or doing exactly as one pleases. This is clear from the way in which he links the Christian's freedom (from the law) to the guidance of the Holy Spirit: in Galatians he begins by reminding his readers in 5:13 that they are free ("You were called to freedom") immediately following up with a warning not to abuse their freedom. Instead he reminds them that—paradoxically!—their freedom implies a new form of slavery: through love they should become slaves of one another. In the following verses this is further unfolded in the sense of a life under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In the Letter to the Romans, Paul uses the contrast "freedom-slavery" quite often as a metaphor. The notion of slavery to/freedom from the law is found here too (see Rom 7:3, 6, 14, 25) and, as pointed out above, the notion of freedom from decay/death is found in Rom 8. In addition to this, the important role that the notion of slavery to/freedom from sin plays in Rom 6 should be pointed out. This is found in particular in Rom 6:12–23, where sin is portrayed

as trying to rule (6:12) and exercise lordship over (6:14) the believer. In 6:16, the options open to the believer are summarised as being slaves either of sin (which will lead to death) or of obedience (which will lead to righteousness). In 6:17–18, Paul thanks God for the fact that they, who once had been slaves of sin, have been freed from sin and have become enslaved to righteousness. In 6:19, he admonishes them to present their members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification in the same way they once presented their members as slaves to impurity. In 6:20, the notion of slavery to sin is repeated, and in 6:22, the fact that they were freed from sin and enslaved to God is mentioned again. Thus, in this section the metaphor of slavery to/freedom from sin is used repeatedly. What has been pointed out in the case of Galatians is true here too: freedom from sin, as such, is not viewed as the ultimate goal in itself, since slavery to sin is replaced by another kind of slavery, namely slavery to God. In other words, the dominant notion is not so much slavery from sin → freedom from sin, but slavery from sin → slavery to God (6:22)/righteousness (6:18; see verse 16, too). In this context Paul thus uses the metaphor of freedom in the sense of a new kind of enslavement.

Thus, the way in which he uses the notion of "freedom" to indicate salvation may be represented schematically as follows:



9. Conclusion

What can we learn from this analysis of the way in which Paul uses redemption metaphors in his letters? What do they tell us of the way in which he conceived salvation? To my mind, the following two aspects are the most important:

Firstly, if one attempts to strip the redemption metaphors that Paul uses to their barest essence, it becomes clear that he uses them to convey his firm conviction that Christ brought about a *radical status reversal* for humankind. In other words, his use of the metaphors

is based on the assumption that humankind finds itself spiritually in a desperate and hopeless situation, and that this can only be changed by Christ, who, through his death and resurrection, makes it possible for them to escape from their desperate situation and instead experience a totally different spiritual situation. This is not merely an improvement in spiritual status, but a totally opposite kind of situation from the one that they experienced until then. Thus, it is best described as a radical status reversal.

Secondly, it has become clear that Paul is convinced that this status reversal leads to new obligations. In other words, he never focuses on human beings in an individualistic sense. Rather, he always views them in terms of a relationship: because a status reversal has been brought about by Jesus Christ, they belong to Him. I suspect that this aspect was perceived much easier in Paul's time, because then people never viewed human beings in the strict individualistic sense that we do nowadays. For them, human beings were always viewed in terms of the social relationships to other people. The mere use of metaphors from the context of slavery/redemption of slavery would have suggested to Paul and his listeners the notion of belonging to a particular *oikos* or moving from one *oikos* to another. To my mind, this is even true in those cases where the metaphors have become dormant, for example in the case of the freedom metaphor, since it has been indicated above that Paul usually employs these metaphors in the sense of a movement from one form of "slavery" to sonship or to another form of "slavery". In terms of the social background presupposed in the New Testament world, it was thus easy for Paul to use redemption metaphors both for indicating a status reversal and new obligations.

How could one communicate this perspective to people living in the twenty-first century? To my mind, one should be aware of two obstacles in the modern way of thinking that make it difficult to communicate Paul's perspective to modern humankind:

Firstly, Paul's anthropology would in all probability be experienced as rather pessimistic, in particular his presupposition that humankind is always in some kind of spiritual slavery: to τὰ στοιχεῖα, to sin, to the law, or to death. Of these, modern people would probably only agree to the last one. Yet, perhaps Paul's perspective is a much needed corrective for our times! If we replace his concept of spiritual slavery with some new modern ones, the truth of his perspective becomes clear. Is it not true that the modern world view could

be described as spiritual slavery to materialism, progress, enhancing of personal security . . .? If one wishes to convey Paul's perspective on salvation, this would seem the best place to begin.

Secondly, Paul's notion of freedom and that of the modern world clash directly. In the Western world, freedom is mostly viewed as freedom from any obstacles or external forces so that one can do as one chooses. To be free is viewed as being one's own boss. As Malina (1993, 83) indicates, this leads to a tendency amongst modern people to think of God in such a limited way that they themselves become totally unlimited. As has become clear above, this is definitely not the way in which Paul thinks about spiritual freedom. For him, spiritual freedom is just another way of speaking of spiritual slavery to God. Thus, if one really wishes to convey Paul's perspective in this regard, it will have to be done in a challenging way: in the modern world to be free in Christ entails a choice to live in spiritual slavery to God!

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CHAPTER FIVE

SALVATION OF THE RECONCILED (WITH A NOTE ON THE BACKGROUND OF PAUL'S METAPHOR OF RECONCILIATION)

Cilliers Breytenbach
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
University of Stellenbosch

1. The Context in Which the Metaphor of Reconciliation is Introduced

Paul uses the phrase "to be reconciled to someone" (καταλλάσσεσθαί τινι) in 1 Cor 7:11, admonishing the estranged wife not to remarry or to be reconciled to her husband. This particular use of the verb, to denote the change from enmity to friendship in an interpersonal relationship, is common in Greek and lexicographically well documented (cf. Spicq 1994, I 309–11, II 262–6 and BDAG, *s.v.*). This however, is not the case when the verb is used to denote a change in the relationship between humans and God. The latter use of the verb, of which Paul left us two (cf. 2 Cor 5:18–20; Rom 5:10) from a dozen known examples (cf. Sophokles, *Aj.* 744; Plato, *Symp.* 193B; 2 Macc 1:5; 5:20; 7:33; Philo, *Praem.* 166; Josephus, *A. J.* 6.143, 151; 7.153, 295; Joseph and Asenet 11:18), is so rare that it can safely be regarded as a metaphorical mapping of non-religious terminology unto a religious domain. From which domain of language usage did Paul transfer the terminology to depict the changing relationship between humans and God? In order to answer this question, it is imperative to note the context in which Paul introduces the terminology in 2 Cor 5:18–20. It is almost *communis opinio* amongst exegetes that Paul defends his role towards the Corinthians in 2 Cor 5:11–6:2 (cf. amongst the more recent commentaries on the Greek text of 2nd Corinthians those of Gräßer 2002; Lambrecht 1998; Thrall 1994; Wolff 1989 and Zeilinger 1997. The older expositions were treated in Breytenbach 1989). It is in this context that he depicts

himself as acting as God's ambassador (πρεσβεύομεν), who offers reconciliatory change in the relationship between humankind and God. Before turning to the precise function of the metaphor of reconciliation in 2 Cor 5:18–20, it is advisable to have a good look at the lexical meaning and the use of the noun "reconciliation" and the verb "to reconcile", in Greek respectively δι' – or καταλλαγή κτλ. and δι' – or καταλλάσσειν κτλ.

2. The Lexical Meaning of δι' – or καταλλαγή κτλ and δι' – or καταλλάσσειν κτλ[1]

To appreciate Paul's use of the metaphor of reconciliation, it is necessary to know exactly what is meant by the word.[2] Reconciliation (δι' – or καταλλάσσειν κτλ.) means a change from enmity to friendship. The process results in peace and friendship. This is why Hesychius (*s.v.*) glosses the word καταλλαγή with εἰρήνη, φιλία. To reconcile is thus to make peace or friends. Hesychius consequently glosses ἀποκαταλλάξαι with φίλον ποιῆσαι. In the same vein the Suda (*s.v.*) notes on διαλλαγή εἰρήνη . . . and then comments on (614) διαλλαγῆναι τὸ δι' αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἐχθροῦ παρακληθῆναι καὶ φιλωθῆναι.

3. The Use of 'Reconciliation' and 'To Reconcile' in Hellenistic Greek[3]

It has become clear that everyday language use is metaphorically loaded (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Through the ages, people spoke about one thing in terms of another, transferring concepts from one

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[1] For more detail, e.g. from Pollux' Onomasticon, cf. Breytenbach (1989, 46–64). Constraints on Porter's study (1994, 15) lead to the omission of διαλλάσσειν κτλ. Apart from καταλλάσσειν κτλ. he (1994, 23–116) extensively documents the use of the bi-compositum ἀντικαταλλάσσειν κτλ., including some cases from the 2nd century BCE until the 2nd century CE that shed some light on Paul's usage (e.g. Plutarch, *Ant.* 19.3–4; Pseudo-Herodianus, *De prosodia catholica* 3.1.108). Overwhelmingly however, the verb refers to the exchange of goods between individuals.

[2] Due to the valuable work of Dupont (1953), Fitzmyer (1975) and Marshall (1978), the confusion in the French and English speaking scholarly communities was less prevalent than amongst German scholars. Cf. also, *s.v.*, Spicq (1994), the 3rd edition of BDAG and Fitzgerald (2003).

[3] For a more comprehensive presentation of the material see Breytenbach (1989). Bash (1997) is correct in stating that my book lacks full treatment of the πρεσβ-

semantic domain to another. In Jewish-Christian tradition for example, life is depicted in terms of a journey. The venture offers alternatives of an easy and a difficult road, which lead to two different destinations (cf. Mt 7:13–4, 21; 19:23–4; 23:13). In metaphorical language use, some characteristics of the event(s) and/or entity/ies of a source domain are selected and mapped unto the event(s) and/or entities of a target domain (for more detail see Lakoff and Johnson (1980)). When Paul selects some traits of the event to send ambassadors to negotiate for reconciliation, he selects only those characteristics that he considers appropriate for his communicative aims. He describes his mediating task to the Corinthians (target domain) in terms of the actions of an ambassador (source domain). He depicts the change in relationship between God and the Corinthians (target domain) in the terminology of reconciliation (source domain). The target domain and what the language user wants to communicate about it, determines the selection and restructuring of those parts of the source domain that are selected to be mapped onto the target domain. Unfortunately this process of metaphorical transference of originally non-religious terminology across a semantic boundary to a religious domain is still misapprehended by some scholars (e.g. Bash 1997). Underlining differences between the source domain of the metaphor and the target domain unto which some of the characteristics of the source domain have been mapped, some scholars seem to require the reproduction of the source domain in the target domain. In terms of the rules and functions of mapping across semantic boundaries, it is inappropriate to demand the target to be described as a replica of the source.

Where, as in 2 Cor 5:18–20, καταλλάσσειν is mediated by an ambassador, it is part of the process of peace making, denoting the change from enmity to peace, from hostility to friendship. Reconciliation can also be seen as the result of peace negotiations,[4] part of the truce

terminology. At the time of writing, I was painfully aware of the insufficiency of available research in classical studies on the different roles of the πρεσβεία. It was however, beyond the scope of my investigation to clarify that matter. Now one can gratefully refer to Bash's presentation of the epigraphic material, noting their scant use of the language of reconciliation. Bash unfortunately diminishes the fact that in Greek literary documents from the early Roman empire, the language of reconciliation occurs in historical writings, and here, to use his own words (1997, 70–1), "embassies are described as a tool of international relations . . .," the majority of the embassies "concern war or international diplomacy."

[4] Bash (1997, 30–2) overlooks the fact that in many instances δι' or καταλλαγὰς ποῖειν is used as synonym for εἰρήνην or φιλίαν ποῖειν (cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus,

that is agreed upon, as is aptly illustrated by Diodor. "To Hermes they attribute those who in wars came forward for to be heralds for reconciliation and peace treaties . . ." (τῷ δ' Ἑρμῇ προσάπτουσι τὰς ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις γινομένας ἐπικηρυκείας καὶ διαλλαγὰς καὶ σπονδάς . . .—5.75.1). These heralds are called ambassadors, and they intercede on behalf of their compatriots, they are to propose the reconciliation (οἱ πρέσβεις οἱ τὰς καταλλαγὰς δῆθεν πρυτανεύσοντες—Cassius Dio, 41.16.4).

According to 2 Cor 5:18–20 Paul was entrusted with the λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς. He acts as an ambassador (πρεσβεύομεν), representing Christ (ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ). As if God is inviting through him (ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν), Paul begs the Corinthians on Christ's behalf (δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ) to be reconciled to God. Keeping his vocabulary in mind, it is important to note that this terminology[5] is widely associated with the action of a πρεσβευτής making supplication (δεῖσθαι) or inviting (παρακαλεῖν) on behalf of the one (ὑπέρ τινος) who had sent him (cf. Spicq 1997, III 175–6; Bash 1997, 75–6, 88–9, 100–1).

Amongst their many functions (cf. Spicq 1997, III 172–6; Bash 1997, 58–9, 70–1), embassies (πρέσβεις) had the task to exhort. They could make supplication for a wide range of things. Politically they negotiated treaties for alliance and friendship (cf. 2 Macc 4:11; 8:17; 5:17),[6] peace (Lk 14:32) and reconciliation (διαλλαγάς—cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 3.9.2; 3.50.4; 5.21.1; 5.31.2; 6.67.2; 6.88.2; Josephus, *A. J.* 15.136). Even in private letters from the 2nd century C.E., persons responsible for estrangement beseeched the other party to be reconciled to them (παρακα[λ]ῶ σαι μήτηρ, δ[ι]αλλάγητί μοι—BGU III 846; παρα]κληθείς, ἄδελφε, διαλλάγηθί μοι—PMich VIII 502.7–8; cf. PGiss 17, 13–4 and Fitzgerald 2003, 250–1). Embassies (πρέσβεις) inter alia *invite* (παρακαλέω) to peace treaties, as we learn from Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. rom.* 5.62.1): "Sending ambassadors in many directions, it (the city-state) invited the neighbouring

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Ant. rom. 2.45.1; 2.76.3; 3.7.5–6; 3.50.4; 5.49.2; 8.48.2; Breytenbach 1989, 56–7; Balch 1997) and that δι'- and καταλλακτής are used as referential synonyms for πρεσβευτής (cf. Syll 472.1; Josephus, *B. J.* 1.224, 254; compare Isa 37.7 LXX to 4 Reg 19.9).

[5] Cf. 2nd Cor 5.20: *Ὑπὲρ* Χριστοῦ οὖν *πρεσβεύομεν* ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ *παρακαλοῦντος* δι' ἡμῶν *δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ* Χριστοῦ, *καταλλάγητε* τῷ θεῷ.

[6] Even a probe from Polybius, who does not use δι'- or καταλλάσσειν κτλ but synonyms like διαλύειν κτλ, illustrates the point: 18.42, 48–9, 54; (20.9); 21.4–5, 15–6, 25, 29–30, 33, 35–7, 39, 43.

cities to an alliance (πολλαχῇ διαπέμπουσα πρέσβεις παρεκάλει τὰς πλησιοχώρους πόλεις ἐπὶ συμμαχίαν . . .)." Dionysius calls the peace proposals λόγοι διαλλακτηρίοι (*Ant. rom.* 5.31.1).[7] From Cassius Dio (48.11.1–2) it becomes clear that the initiator of the change in relationship invites *through* (διά) envoys: "Accordingly he often proposed reconciliation to them personally through friends (διά τῶν φίλων ἐς τὰς καταλλαγὰς προεκαλέσατο), and when he accomplished nothing, he sent to them envoys from the veterans" (ἐκ τῶν ἐστρατευμένων πρέσβεις πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἀπέστειλε).[8] From Diodor we learn that the ambassadors pleaded (δεῖσθαι) for peace (16.82.3). Plutarch relates that when Alexander came to Epaminondas he *begged* (δέομαι) him to reconcile (δεόμενον διαλλάττειν—*Pel.* 26.2). Chersias the poet was reconciled with Periander at *Chion's solicitation* (διήλλακτο τῷ Περιάνδρῳ νεωστί, Χίλωνος δεηθέντος—*Mor.* 156F). Dionysius of Halicarnassus tells the compelling story of the Sabine women who intercede *on behalf of* (ὑπέρ) their Roman husbands "Hersilia, who had proposed the plan and was at the head of the embassy (τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ἔχουσα τῆς πρεσβείας Ἑρσιλία), delivered a long and pathetic plea, begging them to grant peace to those who were begging on behalf of their husbands (ἀξιοῦσα χαρίσασθαι τὴν εἰρήνην ταῖς δεομέναις ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνδρῶν) and on whose account, she pointed out, the war had been undertaken" (*Ant. rom.* 2.45.6). This embassy finally moved the Sabines to reconcile (ποιεῖσθαι τὰς διαλλαγάς), i.e, to conclude friendship (συνθῆκαι περὶ φιλίας- *Ant. rom.* 2.46.1). Finally, reconciliation often goes hand in hand with amnesty, as we learn from Aelius Aristides' depiction of Themistocles. "For before the barbarians came, he reconciled the cities, and remitted the charges against the citizens from his city." (πρὶν μὲν γὰρ ἥκειν τοὺς βαρβάρους, τάς τε πόλεις διήλλαξε καὶ τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως πολίταις ἀνῆκε τὰ ἐγκλήματα—*Or.* 3,344 Behr; nach D. XLVI).[9]

There can be little doubt that Paul depicts his role as apostle to the Corinthians metaphorically in the language of the Hellenistic and Roman polis-diplomacy.[10] From the use of the verbs commonly associated with the process of reconciliation—πρεσβεύω, παρακαλέω and

[7] Cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 11.62.4; 6.49.2; 6.73.1.
[8] Translation LCL. Cf. also Diodor 20.77.3.
[9] Cf. also Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 3.8.4–5.
[10] Bash (1997) ignores cases such as 2 Cor 5.20 and Rom 5.1, 10, where the καταλλάσσειν κτλ. terminology is respectively intertwined with πρεσβεύειν and εἰρήνη.

δέομαι, and all of them are used in 2 Cor 5:20—it is evident that Paul selected language from this domain in order to depict his mediating role toward the Corinthians (cf. Breytenbach 1993, 63–4; Fitzgerald 2003, 249. 256). It should be stressed however, that Paul's metaphoric language of reconciliation has little to do with metaphors taken from a cultic domain. This explains the absence of cultic terminology in 2 Cor 5:18–20 and Rom 5:10–11.[11] The language of reconciliation has in fact no cultic background. Furthermore, it rarely transferred to relationships between gods and between gods and humans.

In a few instances the notion of reconciliation is used to describe the actions of a deity or the relationship between gods. They are then depicted in terms of human action. The relationship between the parties changes from enmity to friendship. Pausanias narrates how Zeus cunningly moved Hera to be reconciled with him (*Descr.* 9.3.2) whilst Aelius Aristides transmits the myth that Zeus "was the only god to reconcile Hera and her son (τὴν Ἥραν λέγουσιν ὡς μονος θεῶν τῷ υἱεῖ διήλλαξε)" (Dionysos 29). According to Diodor (5.68.2–3), Demeter, grieving at the loss of her daughter and raped by Pluton, burned the crops; because of enmity towards Zeus (διά τε τὴν ἔχθραν τὴν πρὸς τὸν Δία). She became reconciled to Zeus, only after she had regained her daughter Persephone (διαλλαγῆναί τε τῷ Διί). This human way of depicting the relationship between gods is also applicable in cases, when the relationship between gods and human beings changes. Sophocles' Aiax for example, reconciled himself to the gods by abstaining from anger (θεοῖσιν ὡς καταλλαχθῇ χόλου.—*Aj.* 743–4)[12] and Plato's Aristophanes warns in the Symposium: "Let none in act oppose him (sc. Eros)—and it is opposing him to incur the hate of Heaven. If we make friends with the god and are reconciled (φίλοι γὰρ γενόμενοι καὶ διαλλαγέντες τῷ θεῷ), we shall have the fortune that falls to few in our day, of discovering our proper favorites" (*Symp.* 193B). In these cases, albeit that Plato expresses the similarity between reconciliation and becoming friends, it is the human agent who reconciles himself with the god(s). The gods are disposed to forgive the offences of men and are easily reconciled (εὐδιάλλακτοι), their anger being appeased by prayers and sacrifices (Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 8.50.4).

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[11] For more detail on 2 Cor 5.21 cf. Breytenbach (1993, 73–75); on διὰ τοῦ θανάτου in Rom 5:10 cf. *infra.*

[12] Cf. Polybius 15.20.5.

Hellenistic Judaism forms part of this tradition by transferring the terminology of reconciliation to the relationship between the only God and the Jewish people. It is however inappropriate to maintain that Hellenistic Judaism had an own peculiar language usage which could explain the origin of Paul's use (*pace* Kim 1997, 361–2 and Bash 1997, 100–104; see Silva 1980). The few instances in some writings of Hellenistic Judaism where reconciliation terminology is mapped onto the relationship between God and humans differ from each other stylistically. In each case it is a phenomenon of individual language usage (style), parallel to the metaphorical use of terminology by Paul. It is linguistically incorrect to pretend Hellenistic Judaism as being a language user and to make Paul's Greek dependent on "*the* Hellenistic Jewish usage of the καταλλάσσειν-terminology" (Kim 1997, 362. My emphasis) or "conception of reconciliation" (Kim 1997, 363). Based on a handful of occurrences from differing geographical origin (2 Macc and Philo) and times (Josephus), which are highly invariant, it is impossible to postulate a separate Hellenistic Jewish dialect of which Paul could have been part. Or does one want to suggest that Paul travelled to Alexandria and read Philo and survived the Neroian persecutions to read Josephus' Bellum in Rome? After a century one rather avoids reverting to a pre-Deissmann position in the lexicological description of the Greek of the first Christian authors (cf. Breytenbach 2005). These parallel stylistic phenomena in 2nd Maccabees, in the writings of Philo and Josephus are very different from Paul's metaphorical use. In those few instances where the terminology refers to a change in the relationship between God and the people *God changes*, he reconciles himself to them. In the introductory letter to *2nd Maccabees*, the Jews in Jerusalem and in the land of Judea express a wish concerning the Jews of Egypt: "May he (sc. God) hear your prayers and be reconciled to you, and may he not forsake you in time of evil." (καὶ ἐπακούσαι ὑμῶν τῶν δεήσεων καὶ καταλλαγείη ὑμῖν καὶ μὴ ὑμας ἐγκαταλίποι ἐν καιρῷ πονηρῷ—2 Macc 1:5). Even though God makes peace (1:4), he is the one who reconciles himself to the Jews. God is the agent who brings about the change; he changes from being hostile to being friendly. The reflective phrase, however, is still fundamentally different from Paul's utterances. Paul's God does not change, he does not reconcile himself to his human enemies, instead, he reconciles humans to himself (cf. infra). It is therefore unlikely that Paul "is moving here in the same circle of thought as the martyr theology of 2nd Maccabees and

may even have been prompted by it" (Dunn 1988, 259). For Paul, God is not the object of change, he actively reconciles humankind to himself (2 Cor 5:19; cf. 2 Cor 5:18; Rom 5:10). There is another, even more fundamental difference between Paul and 2nd Maccabees. For Paul reconciliation does not imply a change on the side of God. He regards reconciliation as an expression of Christ's or God's love towards the sinner. For the author of 2nd Maccabees, God is the one who changes, terminates his wrath. Antiochus Epiphanus, for example, could only defile the temple by touching the sacred vessels with his unclean hands, while the Lord was for a moment angry at the sin of the people. This changed, then ". . . what was forsaken in the wrath of the Almighty was restored again in all its glory when the great Lord became reconciled" (2 Macc 5:20. ὁ καταλειφθεὶς ἐν τῇ τοῦ παντοκράτορος ὀργῇ πάλιν ἐν τῇ τοῦ μεγάλου δεσπότου καταλλαγῇ μετὰ πάσης δόξης ἐπανωρθώθη). In chapter 7 the youngest of the seven martyrs addresses Antiochus: ". . . we are suffering because of our own sins. And if our living Lord is angry for a little while, to rebuke and discipline us, he will again be reconciled with his own servants (καὶ πάλιν καταλλαγήσεται τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ δούλοις—2 Macc 7:33)." This passage again underlines that for the author of 2nd Maccabees, reconciliation is an action of God. He changes from being angry towards his own servants (ἐποργίζεσθαι) to being reconciled to them. In the end, after turning in supplication to the merciful Lord, the entire community prayed, "that he be reconciled completely to his servants" (εἰς τέλος καταλλαγῆναι [sc. ὁ κύριος] τοῖς αὐτοῦ δούλοις—2 Macc 8:29).

In order to grasp the outcome of *Josephus'* portrayal of the reconciliation of God, a quote from the Jewish Wars (*B. J.* 5.415) will suffice. Josephus maintains that the divine is well-reconciled through those who confess publicly and repent (τὸ θεῖον εὐδιάλλακτον ἐξομολογουμένοις καὶ μετανοοῦσιν). Reconciliation is thus a change on the side of God. He changes from enmity, being angry to being forgiving and merciful. Expanding the biblical narratives on Samuel's intercession for Saul and David, Josephus makes this very clear. A whole night long Samuel (cf. 1 Sam 15) pled to God to be reconciled to Saul and not be angry (δι' ὅλης τῆς νυκτὸς παρακαλεῖν ἤρξατο τὸν θεὸν καταλλάττεσθαι τῷ Σαούλῳ καὶ μὴ χαλεπαίνειν—*A. J.* 6.143). When Saul urged Samuel to return with him to complete thank offerings to God, the latter realised that God was not to be reconciled (ὁ . . . οὐ γὰρ ἑώρα τὸν θεὸν διαλλαττόμενον), and departed to

his home (*A. J.* 6.151). Saul thus remains under the wrath of God (*A. J.* 6.150). When David (cf. 2 Sam 12:1–14) acknowledged his own impiety and repented, God was compassionate and became reconciled (ᾤκτειρεν ὁ θεὸς καὶ διαλλάττεται), saying he no longer was angry with David (*A. J.* 6.153). As far as the notion reconciliation (i.e. exchange from enmity to friendship), is used to depict the relationship between God and humans, it is God who changes his attitude or whose attitude towards men or women is changed from anger or wrath to pity or the absence of anger. The narrative on the Gabonites (*A. J.* 7.294–297) reveals that when God is reconciled, he frees the Hebrews from famine by sending rain.

In this vein Asenet in *Joseph and Asenet* prays that if the Lord "is furious at me in my sins, he will again be reconciled with me and forgive me every sin" (ἐὰν θυμωθῇ ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις μου πάλιν διαλλαγήσεταί μοι καὶ ἀφήσει μοι πᾶσαν ἁμαρτίαν—11.18).

According to *Philo*, Jews who have gone astray, could after a complete change of ψυχή and in full confession of sins, make use of three aids to attain the reconciliation with the Father (τρισὶ χρησάμενοι παρακλήτοις τῶν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα καταλλαγῶν—*Praem.* 166). From the context it becomes clear that next to the goodness (ἐπιείκεια) and kindness (χρηστότης) of God (who rather forgives than punishes), the moral improvement (βελτίωσις) of those who are being lead to reconciliation, i.e. to truce and peace agreements (οἱ ἀγομένοι εἰς σπονδὰς καὶ συμβάσεις), plays a fundamental role to help them to become well pleasing to God, as sons do to their father. Although the mercy and clemency of God are underlined, Philo's view is quite different from Paul's utterance that God reconciled his enemies to himself (Rom 5:10). Paul's theo-logy is different. His own depiction of his role as πρεσβευτής can only partially be compared to the Role of Moses as reconciler (κατ- or διαλλακτής)[13] in Philo or Josephus' writings. God reconciled Paul, the persecutor of his assembly, to him and entrusted him as his ambassador with the message of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18–20; cf. *infra*). Philo's Moses (*Mos* 2.166) appeases the Ruler (ἐξευμενίζειν) through prayers of supplication and confession (ἱκεσίας καὶ λιτάς). Josephus' depiction of Moses as reconciler, entails the effort to intercede on behalf of the people. He has to make God change his judgment, renounce retribution, and set aside

[13] Suda, *s.v.* Διαλλακτής φιλώτης. Ἀριστοφάνης διαλλάττεσθε καὶ ξυμβαίνετε.

his wrath against the people (*A. J.* 3.315). In both cases the mediator attempts to change God after the people have repented. In Paul's case the hostile enemies are reconciled.

4. Paul as Ambassador of Reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18–20)

Since I have treated verses 11–13 and 14–17 extensively elsewhere (cf. Breytenbach 1989: 122–132) there is no need to repeat my exposition. By implicit reference to his own calling as apostle, Paul defends and explains his mission to the Corinthians. Although my overall understanding of the passage has been affirmed by more recent expositions (cf. the already mentioned commentaries and Schröter 1993, 250–320; Porter, 1994; Kim 1997; Wire 2001), new evidence (cf. Breytenbach 1999, 437–442; 2003; Versnel 2004; Eschner 2005), nevertheless, deems it necessary to review my understanding of *verses 14–15a.* The understanding of these verses has a bearing on the understanding of how the reconciliation came about. The διὰ Χριστοῦ phrase in verse 18 might refer to the death of Christ (cf. Porter 1994, 139), but it is more likely that the phrase refers to the role of the risen Christ during his encounter with Paul, calling the latter to be his apostle (for more detail, see Breytenbach 1989, 132–4; Zeilinger 1997, 306). In the ἐν Χριστῷ phrase in verse 19, however, the reference to the death of Christ in verse 14 is reiterated. Since the reconciliation of the world is through the death of Christ, it is imperative to state my understanding of verses 14–15.

In 1989 I still understood the ὑπὲρ πάντων phrase as implying "Sühne" (atonement; cf. Breytenbach 1989, 125), indicating that "to atone/sühnen" has to have a wider meaning than when glossing the Greek verb ἱλάσκεσθαι κτλ. (36). Albeit that the notion of atonement does not necessarily entail expiation through cultic sacrificial rites (cf. Breytenbach 1989, 199–201; 1993, 75–77), I now, for reasons of clarity (elaborated upon in Breytenbach 2005), suggest that the notion of "atonement" should not be used, not even as an interpretive category, when explicating the ὑπὲρ πάντων phrase in 2 Cor 5:14 (for the different possibilities in understanding the phrase, cf. Thrall 1994, 409–11). The Greek tradition of "dying for" which clearly forms part of the backdrop of 2 Cor 5:14–15 does not suggest the categories of atonement or expiation (cf. Breytenbach 2003, 460–

464; 2005, 4.5.2). Paul does not depict the death of Christ without giving the Greek notion an awkward twist when he uses it to express how humanity benefits from Christ dying for all (cf. also Wedderburn 2003). In comparison to the traditional formulaic phrase Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν (1 Cor 15:3), three alterations in 2 Cor 5:14 signify the specific nuance. Firstly, preparing the ground for verse 19, the all embracing effect of Christ's death is stressed, "our sins" are replaced by πάντων. Consequently, in the second place, the ὑπέρ signifies the benefit Christ's death has for every sinner. Paul thus universalises and personalises the effect of Christ death (cf. Breytenbach 2003). Finally, Χριστός is substituted by εἷς. For the interpretation of verse 14b one has to take verse 14c into account. The literal interpretation of verse 14c implies that the consequence of the death of "one" ὑπὲρ πάντων is that all humans are dead. This is unusual in the light of the background of the "dying for" notion (cf. Breytenbach 2003). Normally someone (a spouse or a royal child) dies for another person or the people in order to save him/her/them from a certain death. Taking the third alteration in comparison to 1 Cor 15:3 into account (Χριστός being substituted by εἷς), it becomes evident that Paul uses the notion that the one represents all. What happened to him happened to sinful humanity. In 1 Cor 15:20–1, he introduces this perception to the Corinthians. He would later use this notion in his letter to the Romans (cf. Rom 5:12–21). In 2 Cor 5:14, Christ dies as the one representing sinful humanity (cf. Breytenbach 1989, 127; Schröter 1993, 273–6; Zeilinger 1997, 282–4; Gräßer 2002, 215), saving them from a certain death. Verse 21 helps us in determining the crisis in which Christ's death as a sinner is beneficent to all humankind. Christ died for all, that means, his death was for the benefit of all sinners. How was this possible? Because God made the sinless Christ a sinner in stead of those who knew no justice (cf. 2 Cor 5:21; Breytenbach 1989, 139–40). The wages of sin being death (Rom 6:23), the death of the innocent one "for all" is understood to have the effect that all sinners have died, that is, their sinful existence have been terminated. In the final judgment, they therefore can't suffer the death penalty for their sins any longer, because they are already dead (cf. Rom 6:7). Parallel to Gal 3:13 and Rom 8:3, Paul here seems to understand the death of the one for all as a prolepsis of the eschatological judgment (cf. Breytenbach 1993, 69–72).

My discussion of *verses 16–17* will be brief. In these verses the consequence of Christ's death and resurrection are stated: for him/her

who is in Christ, who has been baptized into the body of the Crucified, the old has passed. Reading the passage as an implicit reference to Paul being called by God (Breytenbach 1989, 107–42 and Kim 1997), this means that Paul the persecutor of the Church, who judged Christ by human standards, is dead the old has passed. Paul, the envoy to the Corinthians is a new creature, he does not judge Christ by human standards any longer (2 Cor 5:16–17).

Verse 18 explains verses 14–15 by introducing the notion of change form enmity to friendship (reconciliation). Paul's new way of judging Christ and the fundamental renewal brought about by the Creator is taken up by the τὰ . . . πάντα in verse 18. Everything mentioned from verse 14–17 has its origin in God's action, it is ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. His action primarily concerns Paul. Although he includes the addressees of the letter in the use of the first person plural, the focus of the ἡμᾶς is on Paul himself. The participle phrase τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ explains who God is. In the light of the intention of this specific passage, Paul utilizes language from the realm of reconciliation in order to portray the change in his relationship to God metaphorically. Though other Jews writing in Greek have used this terminology to depict the change in Gods attitude towards humans, Paul uses the καταλλάσσειν-terminology in a hitherto unprecedented way. He does not share the notion of an easy reconcilable God, who puts his anger behind him to be reconciled (cf. Josephus, *A. J.* 5.415.). God is the one who reconciled Paul, the hostile persecutor of his church, to himself. The action is completed; God changed the relationship between Paul and himself by changing Paul. He did it through Christ. The διὰ Χριστοῦ can best taken (cf. *supra*) as referring to the risen Christ who appeared to Paul when he was called to be an apostle (cf. 1 Cor 15:8). Parallel to Gal 2:9; 1 Cor 3:10 and Rom 12:3; 15:3, δόντος ἡμῖν refers to the task given to Paul when Christ appeared to him. The manner in which the entrusted task is phrased, is very significant: τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς. It is important to realize that ἡ διακονία can denote a "service rendered in an intermediary capacity, mediation, assignment" (cf. BDAG, *s.v.*; 2 Cor 9:12–13; Rom 15:31 cf. *v.l.*), the διάκονος being a "go-between", a "courier" (cf. Collins 1990, 75–95, 169–76) an "envoy" (Georgi 1987, 27–32). God changed Paul into a friend and entrusted him with the mediation of the reconciliation. Paul was appointed to convey what God did to him, Paul. Paul elaborates on his mediating role in verse 20. What happened to him is of fundamental rel-

evance to the Corinthians. Paul thus first reminds them of the foundation of his own reconciliation to God.

Verse 19 is introduced by ὡς and provides an explanatory motivation for the utterance in verse 18. The reflective *coniugatio periphrastica* ἦν . . . κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ foregrounds the subject of the sentence, thus reflecting further on God, the agent of the reconciliation. The imperfect stresses graphically the duration of the action: When all this (cf. the τὰ . . . πάντα of verse 18) happened, God was reconciling the world to himself. Due to αὐτοῖς which intratextually refers (*ad sensum*) to κόσμον, the latter signifies the human inhabitants of the world. Recapping verse 14–15 Paul explains that God was doing this ἐν Χριστῷ, through Christ, who died for all. The unlimited πάντων of verse 14 is restated by κόσμον. The *participium coniuctum* μὴ λογιζόμενος (in the present tense) explains how the reconciliation takes place: "by not taking their transgressions into account." Since the death of the one representing everyone, they are dead. The meanings of the verb λογίζομαι τί τινι (to set down to one's account, "charge to one" [LSJM, *s.v.*]; to "count someth(ing) against someone, to punish the person for it" [BDAG, *s.v.*]) and the noun παράπτωμα (transgression of the law; cf. BDAG, *s.v.*) are to be noted. Christ's representative death resulted in the death of all. It is thus impossible to hold them accountable for their transgressions of the law. The second participle is neither parallel nor subordinated to the first. With a καί Paul co-ordinates the aoristic θέμενος to the periphrastic construction as if it where a finite verb, expressing the completeness of the action. Against the background of God reconciling the world to himself, he entrusted[14] the word of reconciliation (τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς) to "us". In the light of the semantic recurrence of διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς from verse 18 in λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς, and the reference of the first person plural from 2 Cor 5:11 to 5:20, there can be no doubt that ἡμῖν in verse 19 refers to Paul. Remembering that Dionysius calls peace proposals λόγοι διαλλακτηρίοι (*Ant. rom.* 5.31.1), the λόγος about the καταλλαγή which Paul received, is the basis on which he acts.

In *verse 20* Paul once again uses the power of metaphoric language in portraying himself as ambassador of the exalted Christ. As is the case with the πρεσβευτής, the apostle is representing the one

[14] For this reading of τίθεναι τί ἐν τινί cf. Ps 104.26 LXX and Zeilinger (1997, 316–8).

who sent him, in this case Christ, thus expressed by ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ (cf. Spicq 1997, III 175–6; Bash 1997, 75–6). He asks for the sake of Christ (δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ), as if God is appealing through him (ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν): "be reconciled to God" (καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ). Paul represents Christ. As is common in Paul, the action the apostle performs on the behalf of Christ, is also performed in the authority of God. The phrase ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν maps the source domain of the πρέσβεις-metaphor in an extraordinary manner onto the target domain of Paul's mediating task. It is not the defeated or the beleaguered, making supplication for peace. Through his envoy, God is the begging one. He asks the Corinthians to be reconciled to himself. Whether one takes καταλλάγητε to be passive (so Zeilinger 1997, 319; Breytenbach 1989, 136) or deponent (so Lambrecht 1998, 100), in either case the Corinthians are beseeched to accept the λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς in order for their relationship to God to be changed from the current hostility to one of friendship and love.[15]

5. The Expected Salvation of the Reconciled Enemies of God (Rom 5:10–11)

As in the case of 2 Cor 5:14–15, there is no need to revert to the notion of "atonement" in order to explain Rom 5:6–8 (cf. Fitzmyer 1993, 401; Lohse 2003, 169–70; Breytenbach 2003). Continuing the rhetorical pattern of verses 8–9, Paul argues in verse 10, since what is more difficult has been accomplished, that which is easier can be expected. He thus emphasizes that the ungodly (Rom 5:6) weak sinners (5:8) lived in hostility towards God (εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες). Only God's loving initiative could change that relationship from enmity to friendship, to be at peace with God (Rom 5:1). "We" were reconciled to God. The aorist passive (κατηλλάγημεν) emphasizes the completed action by God himself as the logical subject. He reconciled his enemies to himself, thus changing their hostile relation towards him into one of friendship. The 'we' are therefore no longer enemies. They became those who are already reconciled, as Paul states it by using the participle in verse 10b (καταλλαγέντες). How

[15] For the interpretation of verse 21 cf. Breytenbach (1993, 73–5 and 2005).

did this come about? The phrase διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ refers back to the dying of Christ in v. 8 and "is not to be pressed in a sacrificial sense . . . Reference neither to "death" nor to "blood" per se connotes anything sacrificial or cultic; death connotes the giving up of one's life, and blood refers to that" (Fitzmyer 1993, 401). Through Christ's death the former hostile "we" were reconciled to God. In Rom 5:1 Paul describes the current state of the justified believer as having peace with God. Following on Rom 5:8–9, verse 10 again specifies the notion of justification. Using the terminology of reconciliation, Paul recapitulates verse 1. Those who now have been reconciled with God, i.e. those having peace with God, will be saved in future. How will they be saved? Through the life of the resurrected Son, Paul and the Romans expected to be saved in the future (σωθησόμεθα ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ). The inseparable crucifixion and resurrection of the living Son thus form the basis of the current friendship and the future salvation (cf. Lohse 2003, 172). From what will they be saved? Through the parallelism with verse 10, the phrase ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς should be supplemented. The current state of being reconciled, that means being changed from an enemy of God to his friend, forms the firm basis for future salvation from damnation in eschatological judgment. Since the reconciliation by God has already been received (verse 11), the future salvation is certain.[16]

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[16] I am indebted to Annekie Joubert for improving my English.

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CHAPTER SIX

SALVATION IN COLOSSIANS AND EPHESIANS

Petrus J. Gräbe[1]
Regent University School of Divinity

1. Salvation in Colossians

1.1. *Introduction*

Colossae was situated in the upper valley of the Lycus River, surrounded by high mountains. Herodotus described it as a "great city in Phrygia" (7,30.1 πόλιν μεγάλην Φρυγίης). An important trade route to Ephesus in the west went through Colossae. Colossae, however, lost its prominence over the course of time due to the fact that Laodicea, which was only a short distance away, developed into a competitive and prosperous city during the first century BCE. Colossae later fell victim to an earthquake and was not rebuilt.

The name of Colossae subsequently disappeared from history (Lohse 1971, 8–9). Still, the message of Paul's letter, written to this small Phrygian Christian community almost two thousand years ago, remains relevant for us today. For the letter to the Colossians testifies about the finality, adequacy, and all-sufficiency of the eternal, cosmic Christ (Garland 1998, 32).

1.2. *The Cosmological Scope of Salvation: Colossians 1:12–23*

1.2.1. *Verses 12–14*

> (12) . . . giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. (13) For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into

[1] Regent University School of Divinity. Assistance from the Research Institute for Theology and Religion, University of South Africa, is acknowledged.

> the kingdom of the Son he loves, (14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.[2]

This passage is aptly described by Hay (2000, 47) as a "summary of the gospel." It continues the sentence that starts in verse 9 and forms a bridge to the Christ-centred statements of verses 15–20. In verses 12–14 the focus shifts from prayer for the Colossians' future well-being to the work of salvation accomplished in the gospel message.

The passage summarizes the following components of the salvation message: The author praises God the Father as the One who initiates Christian salvation; a salvation given in the form of an inheritance (cf. House 1994, 325). The Colossians are admonished to give thanks to the Father, who has qualified them "to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light." This is a reference to the "hope that is stored up for you in heaven" (v. 5), and is linked with God's accomplished act of rescuing "us" from the power of darkness and transferring us to the kingdom of the Son he loves (v. 13).

Within the context of Judaism the imagery of deliverance and inheritance alludes to Israel's exodus from Egypt and entrance into the Promised Land. Hay (2000, 48; cf. also Martin 1974, 107) points to the similarity between Paul's language about a "share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light" and Qumran texts that mention the "lot of darkness" or of "Belial" (1QS 2:5–9; 1QM 1:11–13), as well as the inheritance of the "lot of the saints" (1QS 11:7–8; 1QH 14:13). Movement from darkness to light is a metaphor often used for religious conversion in ancient Jewish and Christian sources (cf. for example Eph 5:8; 1 Thess 5:4–5; 1 Pet 2:9; *Joseph and Asenath* 8:9; 15:12; see also the terms for conversion and redemption in Acts 26:18, 23).

The contrast between darkness and light indicates a previous bondage to satanic and demonic powers and, conversely, to the freedom that Christians come to know under the rule of the Son of God (cf. also Acts 26:18: "to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins"). This release, transferred allegiance, and radical new freedom are dramatically described by the verbs ῥύεσθαι (to set free) and μεθιστάναι (to transfer).

A parallel common metaphor involves servitude and release. Israel was delivered from Egyptian slavery and transferred to the land of Canaan. Josephus (*Ant.* xii. 149) notes that Antiochus III relocated

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[2] Scripture quotations are from the New International Version (NIV).

several thousand Jews from Mesopotamia and Babylon and settled them in Lydia and Phrygia. The Qumran community also rejoiced that it was delivered from its enemies and came to rest in the company of the children of light (Martin 1974, 108).

Verse 14 affirms that "we" have redemption in the Son, a status that is equated with "the forgiveness of sins". The concept of 'redemption' (ἀπολύτρωσις) has sacrificial overtones and is also used in Rom 3:24; 8:23; 1 Cor 1:30; Eph 1:7, 14; 4:30. The correlation of salvation and forgiveness of sin is attested to by numerous New Testament passages (cf. Matt 26:28; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18; Heb 9:22; 10:18).

Using a few key concepts, this passage introduces the message of salvation, defines the church as constituted by divine action and comprised of those qualified to receive the inheritance of the saints, and identifies these saints as having been rescued from darkness and situated in the realm of the Son's lordship. They have been granted redemption through the forgiveness of sins (Hay 2000, 49). These verses reflect the primary experience of faith and baptism as the liberating act of God (described in the aorist).

The overarching context is a summons to thanksgiving. The community that reads these words has long since been baptized; however the transition from darkness to light is accomplished not merely once and for all, but constantly anew (Schweizer 1982, 54).

1.2.2. *Verses 15–20*

> (15) He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. (16) For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. (17) He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (18) And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. (19) For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, (20) and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

This passage's poetic or hymnlike form has long been recognized.[3] The framework in which this "cosmological" hymn is set in Colossians is

[3] The issue of Paul's redaction of an independently existing hymn has been widely discussed in commentaries and studies on this passage (a detailed analysis of the structure of the pre-Pauline traditional composition and of Paul's redaction is, e.g., given by Martin 1974, 109).

the *fact of redemption*. The thanksgiving in verses 3–8 leads into the assurance of Paul's prayers for his readers and his hope that they may give thanks to the Father who has rescued them from the dominion of darkness and brought them into the kingdom of his beloved Son "in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Verses 15–20 follow on this statement and reiterate the topic of redemption at the end of verse 20 with an emphasis on cosmic reconciliation, "making peace through his blood, shed on the cross." The application of this message of redemption and reconciliation to the Colossians occurs in verses 21–22. Colossians 1:15–20 is, therefore, a statement about the Son "in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins," and this redemption is "through his blood, shed on the cross." Within its present context the meaning of the hymn is determined by the soteriological brackets in which Paul has placed it (Pollard 1981, 573).

With the concepts of *salvation* and *cosmology* we touch upon two themes central to the letter to the Colossians. How would these concepts be interpreted in the ancient world of Asia Minor? Alongside the universal longing for salvation, found in every form of religion, there is the desire to explore and know the nature of the world in which human beings are situated. Whether in a philosophical, mythical, metaphysical or poetical form, the ancient Greeks had achieved an understanding of the universe as a *cosmos*—a well-ordered system. During the turbulent history of the Mediterranean world from Alexander to Augustus, the old political life broke down and norms of conduct were no longer clear. Zeno and the early Stoics attempted a rescue operation, by portraying the universe itself as a great *polis*, a unified city of gods and men ruled by one law and one great principle of reason. Through understanding this law, the wise man could rise above the *tyche* or blind chance that ruled in the affairs of men.

Stoic metaphysics and cosmology were, therefore, the answer to the specific and urgent religious need for salvation in that context. Hellenistic religion and philosophy emphasized a contrast between the order and peace of the supralunar sphere and the disorder and strife in the sublunar sphere. The belief also became prevalent that there were powers in the heavenly regions that were malign and opposed to the welfare of human beings. This trend was evidenced by the rapid growth of astralism, magical practices, the mystery religions, and the later rise of Gnosticism.

That cosmology was integral to the religion of the day, is evidenced by the fact that in later Greek philosophy and religion the divine

element in man (the *logos spermatikos*, *daimon*, or *pneuma*) eventually found its way to the heavenly spheres to enjoy the bliss of contemplating the stars.[4] Belief in celestial powers was taken literally. Greek philosophy distinguished a *kosmos noetos* from a *kosmos aisthetos*; a world grasped by the mind from the spatial world perceived by the senses. A cosmology—or series of cosmologies—developed in which the nature of the interrelations between astral and terrestrial realities was elucidated. As a result, the category of causality was not clearly distinguished from that of personal agency. The dualistic distinction between soul and body made it easier to see the soul in a star than on earth. And so the universe, which was increasingly experienced as not being the proper home for human beings, rapidly came to be conceived as a multi-tiered prison.

The shortcoming of this cosmology was that it could not adequately explain the phenomenon of evil. In the chaotic situation of the later Hellenistic age, the world appeared as almost wholly evil. This was the fertile ground that gave rise to second century AD Gnosticism. The old gods were dethroned and turned into demonic powers. Beneficent divine powers were regarded as inconceivably distant; effectively non-existent. The view was accepted that salvation came to human beings through human beings themselves.

In the complex speculations of the Gnostics, astronomy and salvation-geography were essentially indistinguishable. The Stoic doctrine that spirit was a finer form of matter was foundational here. Salvation and cosmology were very closely linked (Barbour 1967, 257–263).

Within this cultural and philosophical setting, Colossians 1:15–17 asserts Christ's dominance in the cosmos. The early church clearly affirmed Christ's lordship over all powers (cf. for example Matt 28:18; Rom 8:38–39; 1 Cor 15:25–27; Eph 1:22; Phil 2:10–11; 1 Pet 3:22; Rev 1:5; 12:5).

Over and against the assertion that faith in Christ was not sufficient to secure salvation, and that magical practices were necessary to persuade and overcome the astral guardians of the higher realms of salvation, the letter to the Colossians asserts Christ's priority and all-sufficiency (Barbour 1967, 265).

According to verse 18, the Son is called the "beginning" (ἀρχή) and the "firstborn from the dead". This statement implies that Christ's

[4] See for example the writings of Cicero, Seneca and Plutarch.

resurrection prepares the route of salvation for others (cf. 1 Cor 15:20–27) and parallels the affirmation that the Son is the "firstborn over all creation" (v. 15).[5] The soteriological implication is that redemption is a kind of new creation (see also 3:10–11; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15). The purpose clause, "so that in everything he might have the supremacy," reemphasizes the claim that the Son is absolutely pre-eminent, as do other terms for supremacy in this hymn: "firstborn" (vv. 15b, 18c), "before all things" (v. 17a), "head" (v. 18a) and "beginning" (v. 18b) (Hay 2000, 61).

The two infinitives κατοικῆσαι (to dwell) and ἀποκαταλλάξαι (to reconcile) complete the sense of the verb εὐδόκησεν (he was pleased): God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile all things to himself. A comparison between Col 1:19–20 and 2 Cor 5:19[6] underscores significant themes. For 'reconcile' 2 Cor 5 uses the verb καταλλάσσω, while ἀποκαταλλάσσω occurs in Col 1:20. The concept 'world' (κόσμος) in 2 Cor 5 (and also in John 3:16) seems to refer only to humanity. In Col 1:15–29, τὰ πάντα ('all things', εἴτε τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἴτε τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, "whether things on earth or things in heaven"), refers to the entire universe, including the superhuman beings listed in verse 16[7] and the nonhuman creation generally. While the idea of Jesus' reconciling death in Eph 2:14 focuses on the overcoming of hostility between Jew and Gentile, Colossians stresses the idea of the *reconciliation of the entire universe to God*. This notion of "cosmological salvation" was not present in ancient Judaism or paganism. God's love for all creation is, however, affirmed by passages such as Ps 145:8–9, Wis 11:23–26 and Sir 18:13.[8] Paul envisions a future fulfilment of salvation that was cosmologically inclusive (cf. Rom 8:18–24; 11:25–26 and 1 Cor 15:20–28).

Verse 13 affirms that God "has rescued *us* from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves." Verse 20 speaks of God reconciling to himself *all things*, whether things on

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[5] πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως (v. 15): πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν (v. 18).

[6] 2 Cor 5:19: ". . . God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ. . . ."

[7] ". . . things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities . . ."

[8] For further references, see Hay (2000, 63).

[9] On a grammatical level this statement may mean that all things are reconciled both through and to the Son. Within the broader context it is more probable to think of God the Father as the ultimate person with whom the world is reconciled (Hay 2000, 63).

earth or things in heaven.[9] The scope of redemption is the entire world. This climactic statement suggests a distinct universalism in the scope of the message of redemption through the death of Christ. The reader has been prepared for this interpretation by frequent references to "all" and "all things" in this passage (Col 1:15–18). While passages such as Col 1:21–23; 3:6 and 3:25–4:1 warn of a future divine judgment, the universalistic hope set forth in 1:20 underscores the letter's general tone of confidence that what God accomplished through Jesus has implications for everyone and for every aspect of life (Hay 2000, 63–66).

1.2.3. *Verses 21–23*

> (21) Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. (22) But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—(23) if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

The basic structure of vv. 21–23, which is actually one long sentence, is based on the contrast between "once" and "now". This structure is typical of early church baptismal preaching, where 'once' refers to the period before conversion (Hay 2000, 66).

The words καὶ ὑμᾶς (and you) introduce a new subsection, emphasizing that the community referred to in the cosmological discussion of vv. 15–20 are also beneficiaries of the message of reconciliation (cf. ἀποκαταλλάξαι, v. 20; ἀποκατήλλαξεν, v. 22). Those who were alienated from God and enemies of God in their minds because of their evil behaviour have been reconciled with God through Christ's death. This assurance of divine reconciliation has ethical implications: God accomplished the reconciliation "to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation."

Verses 15–20 emphasized that Christ's rule encompasses all things. Here it is further affirmed that the proclamation of the good news is made to all the world. Just as all things have been created in Christ (v. 16), the gospel must be preached to every creature under heaven (v. 23). In conjunction with this assurance of salvation, readers are also admonished to remain steadfast in faith, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel (v. 23) (Lohse 1971, 62).

2. Salvation in Ephesians

2.1. *Introduction*

The letter to the Ephesians is indeed one of the most influential documents in the Christian church.[10] Across the centuries, many have testified to the impact that this letter has had in their personal lives. John Knox's wife read Calvin's sermons on Ephesians to him daily before his death on November 24, 1572. John Mackay (1942, 97), a previous president of Princeton Theological Seminary, also testifies about the decisive influence of the message of Ephesians on his life:

> I can never forget that the reading of this Pauline letter, when I was a boy in my teens, exercised a more decisive influence upon my thought and imagination than was ever wrought upon me before or since by the perusal of any piece of literature. The romance of the part played by Jesus Christ in making my personal salvation possible and in mediating God's cosmic plan so set my spirit aflame that I laid aside in an ecstasy of delight Dumas' *Count of Monte Cristo*, which I happened to be reading at the time. That was my encounter with the Cosmic Christ. The Christ who was and is became the passion of my life . . . He came to me and challenged me in the writings of St. Paul. I responded. The years that have followed have been but a footnote to that encounter.

2.2. *Key Passages*

2.2.1. *Ephesians 1:13–14*

> (13) And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, (14) who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession . . .

In Ephesians, the concept of salvation occurs for the first time in 1:13, in the phrase "the gospel of your salvation" (εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν). This phrase is used in apposition to "the word of truth" (τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας). The concept of "salvation" refers to being rescued or delivered, as is clear later in the epistle (2:5) in the reference to the sinner who is dead in trespasses and is saved or delivered

[10] As correctly pointed by Hoehner (2002, 1).

by grace. The thrust of the message is, therefore, the good news of deliverance from bondage to sin.[11]

Having heard and believed the gospel of salvation, the Ephesian believers were incorporated into Christ and were marked with a seal—the promised Holy Spirit who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. This sealing with the Holy Spirit results in the final acquisition of salvation.[12] Ephesians 1:13–14 forms part of the great opening eulogy with which the author begins the letter, and could also be seen as the crown and conclusion of the entire eulogy.[13]

2.2.2. *Ephesians 2:1–10*

> (1) As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, (2) in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. (3) All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. (4) But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, (5) made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. (6) And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, (7) in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. (8) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—(9) not by works, so that no one can boast. (10) For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

2.2.2.1. Relation with the Preceding Pericope

Ephesians 2:1–10 constitutes the beginning of the main corpus of the letter. It is, however, very closely connected with the preceding section and provides a necessary expansion of themes found there.

- Both in the great opening eulogy (1:3–14) and in 2:1–10, the application of the salvation event and the rule of Christ to the readers are emphasized (cf. καὶ ὑμεῖς, 1:13 and καὶ ὑμᾶς, 2:1).
- The description of the change from adversity to salvation in 2:5–6 is connected closely with what God has done in Christ (cf. ἐγείρας, 1:20; συνήγειρεν, 2:6).

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[11] Hoehner (2002, 237).
[12] See Schnackenburg (1991, 47).
[13] Schnackenburg (1991, 49).

- The expression 'the coming ages' (2:7) is probably influenced by the formulation "not only in the present age but also in the one to come" (1:21).[14]

2.2.2.2. The Structure

What light does the structure of this pericope shed on our understanding of salvation in Ephesians?

> 1 Καὶ ὑμᾶς ὄντας νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν,
> 2 ἐν αἷς ποτε περιεπατήσατε κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος, τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας·
> 3 ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἀνεστράφημεν ποτε ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν ποιοῦντες τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν, καὶ ἤμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποί·
> 4 ὁ δὲ θεὸς πλούσιος ὢν ἐν ἐλέει, διὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἀγάπην αὐτοῦ ἣν ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς,
> 5 καὶ ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ,- χάριτι ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι-
> 6 καὶ συνήγειρεν καὶ συνεκάθισεν ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,
> 7 ἵνα ἐνδείξηται ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσιν τοῖς ἐπερχομένοις τὸ ὑπερβάλλον πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἐν χρηστότητι ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.
> 8 Τῇ γὰρ χάριτι ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι διὰ πίστεως· καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν, θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον·
> 9 οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, ἵνα μή τις καυχήσηται.
> 10 αὐτοῦ γάρ ἐσμεν ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς οἷς προητοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς, ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν.

This pericope consists of two sub-pericopes, namely 2:1–3 and 2:4–10. A distinct feature of this pericope is the way in which contrasting themes occur in them. ὁ δὲ θεὸς clearly introduces the new sub-pericope. After mentioning "the ruler of the kingdom of the air," God, who is rich in mercy, appears on the scene. The theme of being dead in transgressions, which functions so prominently in verses 1–3, is taken up again. Over against the ποτε (v. 3), the present situation of the believers as having been made alive with Christ and saved by grace is emphasized. God has raised them up and seated them in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus. The motif ἐν Χριστῷ (Ἰησοῦ) appears four times in verses 5–10 and is a dominant theme. The "coming age" of verse 7 stands in contrast with the αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου of verse 2. The verb σῴζω occurs twice in verses 5 and 8.

[14] Schnackenburg (1991, 87).

The occurrence of compound verbs with συν- is noteworthy: συνεζωοποίησεν (v. 5), συνήγειρεν (v. 6) and συνεκάθισεν (v. 6).

In verses 5 and 8, "being saved" is linked to "grace": χάριτι ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι (v. 5), χάριτι ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι (v. 8). Verse 8 adds the qualification διὰ πίστεως (through faith) and emphasizes that faith is "not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

Taking up the concept of περιπατέω, verse 10 links back to verse 2. Instead of conducting their lives according to the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air (v. 2), believers are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance that they should walk in them (ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν).

Ephesians 2:1–10 associates salvation with the following concepts:

- Being dead in transgressions and being made alive with Christ (v. 5);[15]
- Being freed by God from following the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air (vv. 2–4);
- Being raised up with Christ and being seated with him in heavenly realms (v. 6);
- Being the workmanship of God (v. 10);
- Being created in Christ Jesus to do good works (v. 10).

2.2.2.3. A Closer Look

Ephesians 2:4–10 is of pivotal importance for the understanding of salvation in Ephesians. In contrast to the readers' previous status of being dead in their transgressions and sins and following the ways of this world and the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the saving power of God brilliantly shines forth as the power bringing life out of death. As pointed out in the discussion above, the powerful salvific work of God on behalf of the believer is explained in a series of three σύν-compounds, namely συνεζωοποίησεν, συνήγειρεν, and συνεκάθισεν—believers have been made alive together with Christ, raised up with him, and made to sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The status of the believer is summarized in verses 5 and 8 with the phrase, "you have been saved" (ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι) (Arnold 1989, 147).

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[15] Schnackenburg (1991, 97) affirms that the *Sitz im Leben* of this passage is to be found in early Christian baptismal paraclesis.

By using the perfect (passive) participle of σῴζω, the author emphasizes the present aspect of salvation to a degree unparalleled in Paul. How should this emphasis be explained? Horacio Lona relates the epistle to the Ephesians to a general situation facing the churches in western Asia Minor.[16] He emphasizes the pervasive influence of a general crisis affecting the entire Hellenistic world. Although Rome was apparently bringing unity to the empire, individuals felt lonely and estranged. The cosmos, previously considered well ordered, was now viewed as the embodiment of evil and as full of demonic "powers".[17] This period in history was a time of "world-anxiety" (*Weltangst*)[18] induced by a realization that the world was unstable and under the influence of demonic powers capable of causing chaos. The Hellenistic world found new answers to these problems through mystical religions. Lona refers to the Ephesian Artemis as a prominent example of a deity whose cult offered deliverance from the world. It was also believed that through worship of the "elemental spirits", protection from the sinister astral "powers" was possible. The author of Ephesians was concerned that the church would respond to this *Weltangst* in the same way as the heathen world. He therefore emphasizes the present availability of salvation in Christ.[19]

Let us have a brief, closer look at the "powers" that were thought to rule the lives of the Ephesians before they experienced salvation. According to Ephesians 2:2a, the unregenerate conducted their lives κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. The question arises whether αἰών should be taken in its usual sense of "age" or "time span", or as the name of a personal power or deity, "Aion". The name of Aion, a god of endless time, is found in several Hellenistic religious and magical contexts. A cult for this deity existed in Alexandria in around 200 BCE.[20] It is interesting to note that by the time Ignatius wrote

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[16] Although the phrase indicating the location of the recipients, namely ἐν Ἐφέσῳ is uncertain as it is missing in the oldest manuscripts P^{46}, B and a*, the believers in Asia Minor and especially the area around Ephesus are to be considered as the addressees of the epistle. This view is supported by Ignatius (Ign *Eph* 12, 2) as well as the early Christian tradition (cf. Lona 1984, 429 note 253).

[17] "'Kosmos' ist nicht mehr das Geordnete, Geschmückte und somit Ausdruck einer positiven Welterfahrung in einer Art von weltlicher Beheimatung, sondern wird zur Verkörperung des Bösen, des Dämonischen, ja zum Ort der Verlorenheit" (Lona 1984, 436).

[18] ". . . die Weltangst, hervorgerufen durch das Wissen um die Existentz in einer nicht stabilen Welt unter dem Einfluß von fremden Mächten . . ." (Lona 1984, 439).

[19] Lona (1984), cited by Arnold (1989, 146).

[20] Reference to literature on the god, Aion, is given by Lincoln (1990, 94).

his *Epistle to the Ephesians* (19.1, 2) αἰών seems to have been understood as perhaps being a personal reference. In the New Testament αἰών is, however, never used to refer to a personal power. Paul instead uses τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, "the rulers of this age" (1 Cor 2:6, 8) or ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου,"the god of this age" (2 Cor 4:4) to denote such powers. We may assume the temporal aspect is very much in view, which would be consistent with its use elsewhere in Ephesians (1:21; 2:7; 3:9, 11).

Κόσμος can also refer to the satanically organized world system that hates and opposes all that is godly (cf. John 15:18, 23; 18:36; 1 Cor 3:19). Within this context the phrase κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου can best be translated "according to the age of this world," meaning the era characterized by this ungodly world in contrast to the age to come (Hoehner 2002, 310).

The previous life of the Ephesians is described as κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος ("in accordance with the ruler of the realm of the air"). This phrase provides a personal connotation to the solidarity of evil, a solidarity of which the recipients of the letter were once part. Supernatural powers, which are hostile to God's redemptive purposes, have already been mentioned in 1:21 and will figure again in 3:10 and 6:11–12. The epistle to the Ephesians affirms that behind these principalities and powers, lies an ultimate personal power of evil, described here as the ruler of the realm of the air, in 4:27 and 6:11 as the devil, and in 6:16 as the evil one. Ἐξουσία is used for the sphere of this ruler's authority. In Ephesians 3:10 and 6:12 (e.g.), hostile powers inhabit the heavenly realms. The background to this notion can be found in Old Testament and Jewish thought, where angels and spirit powers were often represented as inhabiting heaven (for example, Job 1:6; Dan 10:13, 21; 2 Macc 5:2; 1 *Enoch* 61.10; 90.21, 24; cf. also Philo *De Spec. Leg.* 1.66; *De Plant.* 14; *De Gig.* 6, 7) (Lincoln 1990, 95–96).

Τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας, "of the spirit that is now at work in those who are disobedient." In this passage πνεύμα may be more a reference to a spiritual force or influence than to a personal power. Some similarity with Qumran is noteworthy. In 1QS 3.13–4.26, two spirits are mentioned in which people "walk"—the spirit of falsehood is ruled by Belial the Angel of Darkness. In 1 Corinthians 2:12, Paul posits that a spirit is at work in the world that stands in antithesis to the Spirit of God. In Ephesians this spiritual force is depicted as being under the rule of the same evil

being who rules the air. This ruler's evil influence has both a cosmic and a human dimension. His spiritual influence is presently at work in those who are disobedient (literally: "the sons of disobedience").[21]

2.3. *The Meaning of Salvation in Ephesians*

J. T. Sanders (1965:218) aptly summarizes the meaning of salvation in Ephesians, pointing out that "these verses [2:4–7] set salvation over against the cosmic "powers," who are described in 2:1–3 as ruling over the pre-Christian person." Salvation is interpreted in Ephesians as deliverance from the power and influence of the cosmic "powers".[22]

Within the larger context of Ephesians (cf. 2:1–2, as well as 1:20–22), the "powers" are depicted as being hostile. It is probable that Ephesians 2:4–7 has the theological purpose of stressing the salvation of believers from these spiritual "powers". In these verses the author of Ephesians revisits what he said concerning the resurrection and exaltation of Christ (1:20–23) and applies it to believers. Readers are invited to realize that they have been resurrected and exalted with Christ to a position of power and authority far superior to the hostile cosmic 'powers'. The believer who experiences present salvation no longer lives under the authority of the "ruler of the realm of the air".

The meaning of salvation is further explained in verse 6, in the metaphor "co-seating" (συνκαθίζω) with Christ. Although this expression is foreign to other Pauline letters (even to Colossians), this image vividly communicates the believer's access to the authority and power of the risen Lord. The resurrection and ascension of the believer are qualified by "*in* Christ Jesus" (2:6). Only through union with the death and resurrection of Christ does the believer experience the benefits previously described.

Despite the clear present dimension to salvation described in Ephesians, the author still refers to a "coming age" (1:21; 2:7). Future eschatology is not entirely displaced by the author's emphasis on the immanent presence of salvation. The full abundance of God's grace will be bestowed upon believers only in the coming age. Eph 2:5

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[21] There is much discussion in the commentaries about the syntactical place and meaning of τοῦ πνεύματος in the phrase τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας, cf. e.g., most recently, Hoehner (2002, 313–315). In the discussion above I follow Lincoln (1990, 96–97).

[22] Arnold (1989, 147).

and 8, however, emphasize that the believer has, even now, been saved from entrapment in the kingdom of the "ruler of the realm of the air". The proclamation, "you have been saved" (ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι), does not portray an ecclesiastical triumphalism, but rather a "rescue act" accomplished on behalf of believers through their inclusion in what God accomplished for Christ (1:20–21).

It is noteworthy that the concept of salvation in Ephesians is not described in terms of justification, but by using the perfect tense of σῴζω. As the author of Ephesians does not appear to be engaged with Judaizing opponents seeking to enforce obedience to the law, this more general concept of salvation, rather than juridical justification, is considered to be more appropriate. Arnold (1990, 149) therefore, correctly affirms that the overriding issue for the readers of the letter is the dread of demonic influence, not a threat from Jewish legalists. The perfect tense (ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι) accurately depicts the significance of the transfer of dominions procured for the believer by the work of God through Christ.

Throughout the letter, the author clearly distinguishes between the way believers conduct their lives and the way the heathen live. In theological terms, the Gentiles are described as being far away from God,[23] "separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel . . . foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world." In 2:13 salvation is portrayed as *being brought near* through the blood of Christ. The dividing wall of hostility has now been abolished with the purpose of creating in Christ one new man: ". . . (c)onsequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household . . ." (2:19). Salvation is, therefore, situated in the context of the *church*.[24]

The ἐκκλησία in Ephesians signifies the church as the totality of those who believe in Jesus Christ and who are taken up into this community through baptism (see 4:5; 5:26). Every instance ἐκκλησία is mentioned in Ephesians, it refers to the church in her entirety and to her close connection to Christ. As Christ triumphs over the powers, God appoints him as head of the church (1:22). In her significance

[23] Cf. also Col 1:21.

[24] Schnackenburg (1991, 102) correctly titles the section 2:11–3:21, "Christian Existence in the Church of Jesus Christ as the Mystery of Salvation." Lona (1984, 442) also affirms that the response of the author of the epistle to the Ephesians to the circumstances facing the believers is not found in his eschatology, but in his *ecclesiology*.

as the body of Christ, the church is described as the fullness of him who fills all in all (1:23). The church is included from the outset in the great divine economy of salvation. In 3:10 the church is portrayed as the instrument of the divine wisdom, since the plan made by the Creator for the subjugation of the evil powers is realized through her. The church in Ephesians has become the sphere in which salvation takes place. She has to fulfil the role in the redemption-event determined for her by God; never isolated from Christ, but indispensable for his work in the world (Schnackenburg 1990, 295).

2.3.1. *Chosen and Predestined*

The concept of salvation in Ephesians needs to be understood within the context of being chosen and predestined:

> (4) For he *chose* us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love (5) he *predestined* us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—(6) to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves (Eph 1:4–6).
>
> (11) In him we were also *chosen*, having been *predestined* according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, (12) in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory (Eph 1:11–12).

In both these passages (verses 4–6 and 11–12), the motifs of being chosen and predestined are combined with the following notions:

- Believers have been chosen and predestined for a specific purpose (cf. to be; in order that);
- God chose believers in connection with or through Christ's work of redemption (cf. in him; through Jesus Christ; in the One he loves; in Christ). This thought is emphasized in both 4–6 and 11–12.

Our election by God "before the creation of the world" is explained in verse 5 as predestination (προορίσας). This statement would have remained within the framework of the Jewish concept of predestination,[25] were it not for the reference to Christ (ἐν αὐτῳ). The author of Ephesians emphasizes that the act of election and predestination is intimately connected to our being united with Christ. As a result

[25] For literature on the Jewish concept of predestination, see Schnackenburg (1991, 52 note 29).

of our "participation" in Christ (v. 11), we are also assured of our eternal election "in Christ" before the creation of the world. The knowledge of our election leads to the praise of God and obliges believers to live godly, Christ-like lives in this world (Eph 4:1, cf. Schnackenburg 1991, 53).[26]

3. Conclusion

The letters to the Colossians and Ephesians enrich our understanding of the New Testament message of salvation in unique ways. The world, once considered to be a well ordered cosmos, had come to be apprehended as a cosmic prison superintended by hostile spiritual presences. Individuals felt lonely, alienated, and encompassed by implacable evil powers. In asserting the supremacy of Christ, the letter to the Colossians turns the interest of its readers away from cosmological speculation and fear to the centrality of forgiveness and salvation (cf. Barbour 1967, 271). The letter to the Ephesians sets the power of God's salvation over and against the cosmic powers and emphasizes that believers have been resurrected and exalted with Christ to a position of power and authority far superior to the hostile cosmic powers. The message of salvation in both these letters addresses the "Weltangst" of a Hellenistic world in a decisive and comforting way. Those who were once alienated from God have now been reconciled (Col 1:21–22). Those who were separated from God and foreigners to his covenants—without God and without hope in the world—have been brought near through the death of Christ (Eph 2:12–13).

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CHAPTER SEVEN

SAFE IN THE FAMILY OF GOD: SOTERIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES IN 1 THESSALONIANS

Pieter G. R. de Villiers
University of the Free State

1. Paul and His Mission in Thessalonica

1 Thessalonians, written in the early fifties, is the oldest of the Pauline letters and of all New Testament documents. As such it offers unique access to an early form of the apostolic proclamation and its soteriological implications.

Though early, this proclamation reflects the thinking of Paul as an experienced missionary. Paul wrote the letter about seventeen years after his conversion in 33 A.D.[1] He had been working for more than a decade as an apostle in Syria and Cilicia (where his home town Tarsus was located), proclaiming Christ in a predominantly gentile situation and gaining valuable experience as a church planter. His first reported visit to the Thessalonians illustrates this clearly. It took place during a missionary journey to several major cities in Asia Minor and Europe, focusing on Macedonia and Achaia.[2] It is often regarded as his second major missionary venture (49–52 A.D.). Paul thus had been tried and tested in many different situations by the time he wrote 1 Thessalonians. The fact that 1 Thessalonians is the earliest of Paul's letters in the New Testament, should not let one underestimate its theological contents as primitive and undeveloped. Although he wrote to a young, recently established church, Paul was an experienced apostle who had had many opportunities to proclaim his message of salvation in Christ.[3]

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[1] Cf. the discussion of the chronology of Paul by Lüdemann (1984); Jewett (1979) and Roetzel (1997).

[2] Cf. Paul's own reference to these two areas in 1 Thessalonians 1:7.

[3] This profile of the author and the situation of the letter create other problems, though. If Paul was such an experienced missionary, informing the faithful about seminal issues of his message of salvation in Christ, why were they so uninformed about the fate of those who died before the *parousia*?

2. The City of Thessalonica

Paul's teaching on salvation in Christ in Thessalonians is, as happens consistently in all his letters, determined by the contingent situation of his readers. There is a decisive link between the proclamation of the salvific events in Christ and the challenges that the Thessalonians faced. The letter reveals features that are common to other Pauline texts, in so far as there is a fundamental coherence in the underlying salvific message that they share, but it is also unique in the way it integrates the gospel contextually in a Thessalonian setting. Some remarks about the city of Thessalonica therefore must be made to do justice to the contingent nature of Paul's soteriological pronouncements in this letter.[4]

Though Thessalonica had the status of a free city with special privileges, it was also the capital of the Roman Province Macedonia. Politically the city was fortunate to have exercised the right choices between warring Roman individuals at crucial times in its history. In 42 B.C.E. it supported the victorious Anthony and Ocatavian against Brutus, receiving as reward the status of free city. As a result, it was exempted from a heavy tax burden. Despite this status, or, perhaps because of it, Thessalonica displayed all the signs of typical servility of such free cities in order to retain the benefaction of the Romans. This became evident through social and cultic activities like regular games and the institution and observation of the imperial cult. As Meeks (1983, 50) observes, "The Pauline world was one in which, for urban and mobile people, Greek was the lingua franca, but upon which the overwhelming political fact of Rome was superimposed." Social, political and religious activities could not take place without the constant awareness and even fear of this "overwhelming" fact.[5]

There were other forces at work as well. The city was located near the centre of the well-known commercial route, the Via Egnatia, and was a terminus of an important road that ran right up to the Danube. This strategic location as well as its harbour on the Thermaic Gulf made it ideal for commercial and military traffic. As a result, and as proven by archaeological finds and coins, merchants, traders, arti-

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[4] This relationship between contingency and coherence has become an established perspective in Pauline scholarship since the work of Beker (1980; cf. 1991, 15). Also Meeks (1983, 7); Johnson (1986, 268). For a more recent discussion and assessment of Paul's theology, cf. Johnson and Hay (1997).

[5] This explains the uproar against Paul as reported in Acts 17:6.

sans and labourers from all over the world converged on the city, contributing to its power and wealth. In terms of urban conventions of that time, they lived together in neighbourhoods, formed associations and observed their cults and cultures. Thessalonica thus became one of the two most important trading centres in Roman Greece (Meeks 1983, 46).

Fundamental to the political, commercial and social life of the city was it openness to those who entered its gates for these purposes of trade and commerce. Their presence changed the city just as city life influenced them. The letter of the mobile, missionary Paul and his gospel of salvation in Christ to his converts in the city of Thessalonica reveal this process of mutual change and the urban context of his missions. Paul's message of the gospel of salvation rooted deeply in the cities of the Roman world and their social dynamics.

3. The Church

The letter to the Thessalonians contains useful information about the history of the Thessalonian mission. Together with reports in Acts 17, it is possible to reconstruct a profile of the church and its origins. Once again this information also provides significant insights into the nature and function of soteriological aspects of the Pauline kerugma.

3.1. *Origins of the Church*

Paul arrived in Thessalonica, according to Acts 16–17, after a ministry in Philippi and a journey through Amphipolis and Apollonia. This was part of an extensive ministry in Macedonia and Achaia (especially Corinth; cf. 1 Thess 1:7). Rejected and then persecuted by the Jewish groups in the city, Paul ministered to gentiles while he worked as a manual labourer in the city for some time.[6] The result of the

[6] Malherbe (1987, 13) points out that the fact that Paul worked to support himself, indicates that he remained there for a while. According to him, the three weeks indicated in Acts 17:2, must refer to the initial ministry to the synagogue. Roetzel (1997, 206–207), following Lüdemann, thinks that the sojourn in Thessalonica was a matter of weeks. He finds that the picture in Acts 17 is too stereotypical to reflect the real situation. If Paul's ministry in the city were indeed short, it would explain why he had to argue such seminal thoughts in this letter. He did not have the opportunity earlier to speak to the faithful in Thessalonica about them.

mission is described in Acts 17:4, where it is said that some Jewish believers, many devout Greeks and quite a few women were converted. Prominent among the gentiles of high standing (Act 17:12) were some women and Jason, a man of means.[7] In this way a Christian group was established as first fruits of Paul's labour in the city. The letter to the Thessalonians proves that this mission did not peter out, but led to the establishment of a sustainable group.

3.2. *A Church under Pressure*

A major feature of the Thessalonian Christians, as the story in Acts 17 indicates, was that they were exposed to persecution and oppression right from the beginning. This situation continued after Paul's departure from the city, as is clear from 1 Thessalonians. Early in his letter Paul draws attention to these pressures by explicitly linking his Thessalonian ministry to his sojourn in Philippi and then associating both with suffering, persecution and turmoil (1 Thess 1:6; 2:2).[8] Like in Philippi, Paul remembers how he proclaimed the gospel to them ἐν πολλῷ ἀγῶνι (1 Thess 2:2). In 1 Thessalonians 1:6 he refers to them as becoming his imitators ἐν θλίψει πολλῇ (with similar references in 1 Thess 2:14–16; 3:3–4). This oppression was being perpetrated by the Jewish locals who forced Paul to depart from Thessalonica for Athens and their "own compatriots", that is, their pagan neighbours (1 Thess 2:14). The interesting remark in Acts 17:11, where the Jewish groups in Berea are described as friendlier and more receptive than those in Thessalonica, seems to suggest that the Thessalonian Jewish groups had a reputation for being intolerant.[9]

For the Thessalonians, other than for Paul, the experiences of oppression were new. The founding mission of Paul in Thessalonica was under serious threat because of this crisis situation that the young church was experiencing. "I was afraid," writes Paul, "that somehow

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[7] He owned a house large enough for gatherings of the faithful and he stood bail for those arrested by the authorities (Acts 17:5 and 9).

[8] Cf. ἀλλὰ προπαθόντες /καὶ ὑβρισθέντες καθὼς οἴδατε ἐν Φιλίπποις. Acts 16 comes to mind. On the nature of the persecution, cf. Malherbe (2000, 127) who, with De Boer, concludes that it refers to both the reception of the gospel and all the problems that ensued.

[9] The French translation, "de meilleurs sentiments que les Juifs de Thessalonique" and "avec beaucoup de bonne volonté" reflects the original text more adequately. On the history of research of the controversial passage in 1 Thessalonians 2:14–6, cf. the extensive discussion in Schlueter (1994).

the tempter had tempted you and that our labour had been in vain" (1 Thess 3:5). This was the reason why he sent Silas and Timothy to Thessalonica. Worried about the effects of his sudden departure and about the fragile young church, he decided to send Timothy back to them to strengthen and support them in their faith (cf. also De Villiers 2003a). The immediate cause of this delegation writing to them is indicated in 1 Thessalonians 3:1–2, where Paul refers to his emotional state after his departure from the city.[10] Paul sent them "so that no one would be shaken by these persecutions" (1 Thess 3:1–2). The visit of Timothy does not seem to solve the problems in their relationship completely. Paul, learning more from Timothy on his return about conditions in the church (1 Thess 3:6), and happy about some good news, thus found it necessary to write this letter. They needed support to continue standing firm in their faith (1 Thess 3:8). These facts all indicate how precarious and stressful the situation in the Thessalonian church was. Paul's thoughts on soteriology, as will become clear below, are qualified by this oppression.[11]

Except for the persecution, the inner life of the church was also in turmoil. The church, exposed to many itinerant preachers and philosophers, inevitably asked questions about Paul's motives and sincerity (1 Thess 2:3, 5), making life no easier for him and revealing how precarious their situation was. The death of some members made them wonder whether his message about the *parousia* was reliable (1 Thess 4:13–8).[12] They asked themselves what had happened to those who died before the time of the *parousia* (1 Thess 4:13–18). They were also tempted to return to their previous immoral lifestyles (1 Thess 4:1–13). They were refusing to work, were unruly and were insensitive to others (1 Thess 4).

3.3. *Liminality*

These pressures were aggravated by the fact that the church was a small minority within the city. The way in which Paul worked during his missions, indicates that he proclaimed the gospel mostly in a

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[10] Note the repetition of στέγοντες . . . στέγων in 3:1 and 5.

[11] His work in Philippi was not miserable only. It resulted in the formation of a group of believers there that would later support him with gifts during his subsequent Thessalonian ministry (Phil 4:16). Cf. also Malherbe (2000, 129).

[12] On the problem of those who died before the *parousia*, cf. Malherbe (2000, 283–5).

small setting.[13] This is confirmed by Paul's reference in his letter to his self-supportive ministry in the city (1 Thess 2:9). As tentmaker he would have been busy with his craft in a house, probably in a district of traders and merchants. Working in a shop on the street front with the living quarters at the back or on top, he would have been witnessing, in this restricted context, to those visiting him or the family with whom he was lodging (Meeks 1983, 25–32). This is also confirmed by the remark in Acts 17:5 that Paul was located in the house of Jason, a gentile who provided him with accommodation. Though Paul routinely proclaimed the gospel in the relatively larger context of synagogues in the cities he visited, like in Thessalonica, only a minority of listeners accepted his message and joined the new movement. Others were added as his ministry continued, but not in masses. The heart of his work focused on homes. The Thessalonian church would therefore have consisted of a small group of households.

Their conversion to Christianity would not have gone unnoticed in their crowded, gossiping urban setting. "News or rumour would travel rapidly; riots could flare up in a moment,"[14] because of the physical setup and conditions in a city. The conversion would have caught even more attention than normally, because of the way in which the converts severed their ties with their context and social setting. They broke with pagan cults that were unacceptable within the Judeo-Christian thought world that Paul proclaimed to them. Their refusal meant that they came to be regarded as deserters and were perceived as a threat to the existing religious and civic cults in the city. These popular and well-established cults included, except for the imperial cult, the Isis-Osiris cult, the Dionysus cult and the cult of the Cabyri (Donfried 1993, 62). The separation put them in a precarious political and social position, because of the strong Roman influence and the possible threat of any civil instability to the status of the city. By refusing participation in cultic activities, they isolated themselves from the dominant social structures. Roetzel (1997, 104) notes that the persecution in Thessalonica could have been severe, especially in light of the coercion that was used to maintain solidarity of various groups, the family, ethnic groups, the city and the Roman Empire. "While the socialization of believers in the messianist move-

[13] Meeks (1983, 28–9) draws attention to how small ancient cities were, although they were very crowded.

[14] Cf. Meeks (1983, 29).

ment was probably gradual, their singular devotion to the God of Israel and their refusal to participate in the imperial cult or worship the local deities could have brought savage reprisals from families, friends, civic leaders and even Roman officials." In such a large city that strived to keep the Roman powers happy and that feared any form of subversion, Christians must have been subjected to extreme social pressure.

In the light of all this, the situation of the Thessalonian believers was characterized by liminality. They had been removed from their earlier support system and moved into a new, fluid and to a large extent undefined social and religious structure. They had abandoned the large and cohesive structures in which they had found a trusted existence, becoming part of a small group on the fringes and in severe tension with those structures. The group was to a large extent still undefined. It was no longer Jewish and not yet an accepted and tolerated religious structure. In addition, the person who initiated their switch through his dynamic proclamation, left them shortly after their conversion.

It is in this fluid context that Paul wrote to them to support them. Paul expected such pressures from the beginning: "In fact, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we were to suffer persecution; so it turned out, as you know" (1 Thess 3:4–5). He was aware of the liminality of their existence and its implications. Malherbe (2000, 128) describes the situation of such new converts as that of "social, intellectual, and religious dislocation with attendant confusion, bewilderment, dejection, and even despair." All this is of special importance for understanding the soteriology of the letter, since the conditions of the church threatened to undo the proclamation of salvation in Christ (1 Thess 5:5). Paul, pastor that he was, wrote this letter to support them in their faith within this context.

4. The Letter

The fragile situation of the church in Thessalonica required Paul to encourage and strengthen the faithful who lived there.

There is every good reason for Paul's involvement with the Thessalonian church. Despite their difficult situation, their doubts and anxieties, the letter of Paul suggests that they were already active missionaries, spreading the word of the Gospel in and around the city

(1 Thess 1:7; 4:10; cf. De Villiers 2003a). Paul was the team worker, upholding intimate relationships with his fellow believers through his team of co-workers and through his correspondence (Stirewalt 2003). It was of seminal importance to him that churches should be involved in his work and in missions generally. To him this was part of the essence of the gospel. Countering their doubts and addressing their anxieties were high priorities, since the outgoing message of the church would benefit. The power of the gospel was evident in the way Paul was proclaiming it and in the way his converts were emulating his example. To be saved meant to proclaim the gospel.

Paul thus writes extensively on the identity and integrity of the church (Johnson 1986, 260). Those who have been saved in Christ need to be aware of their identity in this world and live a life of integrity. In the first half, Paul writes about this by discussing the nature of the church from an autobiographical point of view (1–3), and in the second, he addresses certain issues related to the church (4–5).[15]

5. Salvation

As mentioned above, knowledge of the urban context of the Thessalonian church and their situation of liminality is decisive for understanding the way Paul wrote to them about salvation. This requires a closer investigation, which will be done by looking at particular soteriological perspectives.

5.1. *God the Saviour*

It is to be expected that this situation of liminality would require a careful discussion of the character of God. Paul had to communi-

[15] Cf. Malherbe (2000, 78–9). For another perspective, cf. the discussion in Donfried (1993, 3–7), who follows Hughes (1990). They distinguish an *exordium* (1:1–10) in which he talks warmly about their witness to the faith and about his relationship with them, the *narratio* (2:1–3:10) that describes Paul's first visit and a proposed second visit, the *propositio* (3:11–13) as an explicit prayer, the *probatio* (4:1–5:3) which is mostly on a moral lifestyle and the problem of those who died before the *parousia*, with, finally, the *peroratio* (5:4–11), on the day of the Lord, exhortation to pursue a positive lifestyle (5:12–22) and with final prayers and greetings (5:23–28). On questions about the integrity of 1 Thessalonians, cf. Richard (1991, 41), who comments, "The claim that 1 Thessalonians is not a unified composition is an old one, but defence of the letter's integrity is vehement."

cate a picture of God to the Thessalonians, vis-à-vis the pagan gods, which the recently converted faithful had served previously or were confronted with in their daily lives. The new converts had to be enlightened more about the basic fact that their service to the living God meant turning away from the idols.

An analysis of the references to God reveals a uniquely positive portrayal. Paul often describes God in this letter in most benevolent terms as the God of peace (ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης; 1 Thess 5:23), who is faithful (πιστός; 1 Thess 5:24), true (ἀληθινῷ 1 Thess 1:9) and loving (ἠγαπημένοι; 1 Thess 1:4). He opens the letter with a reference to God as Father, importing at this seminal point in his text benevolent familial terminology. Elsewhere, in 1 Corinthians 1:3, Paul begins in similar fashion with a reference to God as Father; combining benevolent familial and monotheistic motifs later on when he writes in 1 Corinthians 8:1–6 that the "one" God is the "Father from whom are all things and for whom we exist." The monotheistic motif is both strong and clear when, in this discussion on food sacrificed to idols, Paul denies the existence of idols: "No idol in the world really exists," and "there is no God, but one." For believers there is but this one God, the Father, who exists vis-à-vis the many gods and many lords.[16]

This positive imagery for God is, however, expressed strongest in salvific terminology: God is the One who gives salvation. In 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10, Paul speaks about God's gift of the Son, carefully delineating it as a salvific action of God.[17] In 1 Thessalonians 5:9, this link between God and the gift of salvation is strengthened, when Paul writes that God *destined* the Thessalonians to obtain salvation (εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας).

The character of God is thus expressed especially in soteriological terms: God as Saviour initiates and gives salvation.[18] That God is the Initiator of salvation, is underlined by references to the election and the calling of the faithful by God (1 Thessalonians 1:4; 2:12).[19] Paul refers to the Thessalonians as the elect, linking it with salvation

[16] On the implications of monotheism for Paul's theology, cf. Dunn (1997, 107–8).

[17] Collins (1984, 254) cites a few quotations that illustrate the extraordinary importance of this verse.

[18] On the role of God in the letter and as initiator, cf. Malherbe (2000, 106; 299). He writes on 1 Thess 5:9, "More significant than the syntactical construction is that Paul picks up the theme of God's initiative that began in 1:4 and has continued throughout the letter (e.g. 1:4; 2:2, 4, 12, 16; 3:3; 4:7, 9, 14 . . .)."

[19] Cf. with this the prominent and explicit 2 Thessalonians 2:13 where it is said that God elected the Thessalonians to salvation.

through Christ in the above quoted 1 Thessalonians 5:9. The apostle and his readers have been destined by God to obtain salvation. In other places Paul uses the more general concept of calling instead of election. In 1 Thessalonians 2:12, he writes to them to walk worthy of God's calling of them to his kingdom and glory (ἀξίως τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καλοῦντος ὑμᾶς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ βασιλείαν καὶ δόξαν). The calling of God is here spelled out as having special salvific consequences. They receive the kingdom and glory as a result of their being called by God.

At the same time, salvific terminology is linked with familial ones. God gives salvation through his "son" of whom God is the "Father".[20] The benevolence of the salvific terminology is thus intensified by the familial, household motifs. This enhances the positive nature of the soteriological language.

This benevolent character of God, evident in his salvific will and actions, explains the way in which Paul writes about the lives of God's elected "children". Believers share a special status as the elect of God, enjoying—as children—a special bond with God. The election also creates a special bond between them. Immediately after the remark in 1 Thessalonians 1:4 about their election, Paul therefore addresses them with the familial term, "brothers, loved by God" (εἰδότες, αδελφοὶ ἠγαπημένοι[21] ὑπο τοῦ θεοῦ, τὴν ἐκλογὴν ὑμων). This explains why Paul designates God as Father already at the beginning of the letter (1 Thess 1:4). The church is therefore the new family of God. This is why the general understanding of God in this letter is that of a loving Father who calls the Gentiles from idolatry and grants them salvation. Similarly, those who are in the ministry are brothers who love those Gentiles that respond to their proclamation of God's salvation. The loving apostle thus becomes a mirror image of the loving Father. Paul remarks in 1 Thessalonians 2:8: "So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us (ἀγαπητοὶ . . . ἐγενήθητε)." The relationship between apostle and converts mirrors their relationship with

[20] This initiative by God is not only confirmed by, but also determines other motifs in the letter, e.g., that Paul proclaimed his message of salvation to them, as the word of God and not of men (1 Thess 2:13). This is also the reason why faith is simply described as "faith in God" (1 Thess 1:8).

[21] The perfect tense expresses the enduring quality of the love (Malherbe 2000, 110).

God the Father. Paul dealt with the Thessalonians "like a father with his children" (1 Thess 2:11) and gentle as a nurse of the family's children (1 Thess 2:7). Love abounds between him and the church, as it should abound between them (1 Thess 3:13). The salvific nature of God thus reflects in the relationship between the members of God's new family. They do unto each other what God did for them (cf. esp. 1 Thess 5:11).

God's initiative, as spelled out in 1 Thessalonians, is all the more remarkable because it predominantly concerns gentiles. With such language, Paul indicates that God had acted in a new manner. The Gentiles had received a special place in the circle of love that was established through the salvific, loving action of God, whilst the Jewish opponents who reject Jesus and the apostles, "displease God and oppose everyone" (1 Thess 2:15). The Thessalonians could therefore experience God as loving, unprejudiced and as the One who makes them into the new people of God. This experience would have created that sense of belonging that is needed and appropriate in a context of liminality.

Belonging to God brought about a sense of responsibility that came to the fore in a moral lifestyle that distinguished them from the surrounding cults and their followers. This is why God is so central in the letter, and why Paul reinforces their initial knowledge of God, which turned them away from the idols.[22] In this way, soteriology in 1 Thessalonians does not only reveal the foundational role of God, but also shows how the practice of a distinctive moral lifestyle is inextricably bound with the notion of a saving God (cf. further below on the link between salvation in Christ and a moral lifestyle).

5.2. *Salvation and Christ*

Though salvation is initiated and given by God, it is also closely linked with the person of Christ. Several passages confirm the Christological nature of Paul's proclamation of salvation in 1 Thessalonians. This

[22] Malherbe (2000, 132) makes a careful analysis of how Paul focuses on God in, for example, 1 Thess 1:9–10. "It was not immediately obvious to them, as it was to Jews and to Christians, that God should be the starting point for them in all things (*EpArist* 189, 200, 235). Indeed, some Corinthians still had questions about monotheism more than four years after the church there had been established (1 Cor 8:4–7), and Paul similarly places a heavy emphasis on God in 1 Corinthians" (Malherbe 2000, 123; cf. 237).

dual perspective on salvation reflects his general thinking. Paul generally describes his message as gospel and word of God (e.g. 1 Thess 2:9, 13). He writes about the gospel of Christ (1 Thess 3:2) and talks about the "apostles of Christ" (1 Thess 2:6) at the same time. In similar vein, his gospel of salvation, given by God, is also a gospel of salvation in Christ. This needs closer attention.

5.2.1. *In, with Christ*

Salvation, according to Paul in this letter, is fundamentally a participatory union between Christ and believers as a corporate union or as individuals. This is expressed by the phrase, "in Christ" (1 Thess 1:1; 2:14). To be a church is to be in Christ (1 Thess 2:14), whilst a believer dies "in Christ" (1 Thess 4:16) or "in Jesus" (1 Thess 4:14). To be in Christ is to share in the salvation and in his salvific presence. Those who are "in" Christ, are at the same time seen to be "with" Him as happens when salvation is linked with the σύν descriptions (1 Thess 4:13–5:11). To be with the Lord is here also to be in his salvific presence. The union is also expressed by the many times that Paul speaks of Christ as "our" Lord, indicating that those who belong to Him will receive the full benefaction and salvific blessings that He bestows.[23]

Roetzel (1997, 100–104) has written extensively on this issue. He has traced the research on the participatory nature of faith, and has observed that Paul's participatory language cannot be interpreted in a mystical way, since this would have been sacrilegious to him. His opening address to the Thessalonians about them being in God and in Jesus, for example, does not refer to an organic union with God, but "rather to a corporate union of believers that huddled together to keep their faith alive and encourage each other in the face of persecution." This corporate union inspires a daily lifestyle of proper and holy behaviour, so that salvation as incorporation in Christ shows itself over duration of time—amongst others by perseverance in persecution.[24] The union is, therefore, more than a momentary matter.

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[23] Cf. Collins (1984, 280).

[24] In his analysis of 1 Thessalonians 5:4–8, Harnisch (1973, 163–4) draws attention to the apocalyptic thought in the letter. Paul retains a tension between future and present. The believers participate in the end time, but it is a developing existence. The salvation of the end time is already at work in the present, but is much more. That is why believers hope in the still outstanding salvation that is to be consummated with the *parousia*. Although the faithful will be saved from the coming wrath, their present existence has already been changed by this future salvation.

Paul states clearly in 1 Thessalonians 3:8 that "we now live in the Lord." There is an intimate relationship between Christ and believers from day to day. Thus, the call to sanctification of the saved that is so prominent in the letter. The relationship with Christ must work itself out over a period of time. In the admonitions on sanctification, given in 1 Thessalonians 4:1–11, Paul stresses the fact that God does not call the faithful to impurity but to holiness (1 Thess 4:7), by placing this remark in the middle of the section—language that reminds of God's call to salvation. Framing this central remark, are his remarks about how they should "walk" and please God (πῶς δεῖ ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν καὶ ἀρέσκειν θεῷ) in 1 Thessalonians 4:1, and the conclusion, so that you may "walk" properly (ἵνα περιπατῆτε εὐσχημόνως) in 1 Thessalonians 4:12 (cf. further below).

There is little doubt that the situation of liminality that the Thessalonians experienced must have made them particularly sensitive to these participatory images. This is evident in the parallels that are drawn between their situation of oppression and the situation of Christ the Saviour. The one reference in the letter (1 Thess 2:15) to the historical Jesus refers to his death and intensifies this motif by adding that this also happened to the prophets. The Thessalonians themselves are then compared with Jesus and the prophets. In their suffering under persecution they are "imitators" (μιμηταὶ ἐγενήθητε) of the churches of God "in" Christ Jesus. The gospel of salvation in Christ brought the faithful together in a close union with Christ, sharing his fate, but also sharing with other communities of faith who suffered persecution. In their liminal situation, these metaphors reinforce their integration into a new community by stressing their shared lot with Jesus as Son who died and was resurrected. This must have made the notion of salvation particularly relevant to them in their context.[25]

5.2.2. *Salvation through the Death and Resurrection of Christ*

As has been observed, salvation in 1 Thessalonians is linked particularly with the death and resurrection of Christ. In this link, Paul takes over formulas that reflect on a early tradition. He appropriates them in his typical manner. Yet these formulas reflect how he was steeped in a common Christian tradition.

[25] Meeks (1983, 174) similarly describes how the threat the faithful were experiencing from their previous surroundings, was used by Paul to reinforce their solidarity and unity.

The death and resurrection of Christ is interpreted in a soteriological manner in the formulaic 1 Thessalonians 4:14. On the surface level, it seems a simple phrase about Jesus who died and rose again, containing no reference to salvation. The phrase, Ἰησοῦς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἀνέστη, is an *Auferweckungsformeln* that indicates divine agency in the resurrection of Jesus.[26] In the resurrection of Jesus, God is acting eschatologically, as the context of the passage clearly indicates, preempting the resurrection of the dead that is also prominently present in this letter (cf. 1 Thess 4:13–18). Paul sees a similarity between the resurrection of Jesus and the resurrection of the dead. Through the traditional creedal formula, Paul depicts the commonality and solidarity between the death of Jesus and the death of the believers who passed away before the *parousia.* At the same time, the resurrection of Jesus provides the ground and hope for the belief that Christians who have died, will rise at the *parousia.* The power of this belief is to be found in the act of God in the death and resurrection of Jesus; that God will do "likewise" for the deceased faithful. The "likewise" thus implicitly refers to the salvific nature of the death and resurrection. "This analogy between the lot of Jesus and that of dead Christians is such that one can say that Paul interprets the death and resurrection of Jesus, proclaimed by traditional faith, soteriologically even if he has neither introduced interpretative soteriological language into the traditional faith formula, nor appended such interpretative language thereto."[27]

In the context of the letter, in which the death of the faithful in Thessalonians caused so much unease among the remaining believers, the clear proclamation of Paul that they are "with" Christ and will be brought with Him at the *parousia*, as the second half of 1 Thessalonians 4:14 claims, was of seminal importance. It reinforced the message that the new family of God is not determined by human exclusions by race—Gentiles are also incorporated—by adding that the power of death cannot exclude membership of the family. In this way it countered the negative consequences of the liminality that the Thessalonians experienced. To be saved then means to be safe, even in the face of death.

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[26] For more information, cf. Collins (1984, 261). Harnisch (1973, 164–5) points out how the death of Christ "for us" in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 provides the foundation of the eschatological existence of the believers. Also he argues that Paul is using an early Christian tradition that he integrates in the situation of his readers.

[27] Collins (1984, 262–3).

5.2.3. *Salvation through the Death of Christ*

In some cases, Paul links salvation only with the death of Christ. This happens when he speaks simply about salvation in an apocalyptic context in the epilogue in 1 Thessalonians 5:9–11, stating that Christ died "for us". He once again takes over early traditional language.[28] The off the cuff way of this reference illustrates that it has already become formulaic. In this formula, in which the death of Christ is interpreted soteriologically for the first time in a New Testament text, it is understood historically (hence the aorist verb, referring to the event in the past), as is also confirmed by 1 Thessalonians 2:14–15. This historical event is interpreted soteriologically by the ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν.[29] The formulation is indeed general, as Collins (1984, 264) writes, so that it is not clear from the formula itself whether Christ died in our place or as an example. In the present context, though, the formula is clearly understood as salvific and substitutionary. The believers obtain salvation "through" our Lord Jesus Christ and they live "with" Him. Together with the understanding of God as the initiator of salvation (1 Thess 5:9–10), the salvific nature of this phrase is beyond doubt.[30] Even more striking is how this reference to Christ's salvific death is incorporated in the particular setting of Thessalonians. They need not fear about their deceased friends, because the death of Christ for us assures that those who have become members of the new family of God "whether we are awake or asleep we may live with Him" (1 Thess 5:10). The situation of liminality is thus countered and addressed through central soteriological motifs in the gospel.

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[28] Reese (1979, 60): "This is the earliest witness to the redemptive nature of the death of Christ." Malherbe (2000, 299) writes that the phrase, reflecting a Christology that appears in earliest strata of Christian tradition, is prominent in Paul's reflection on the saving work of Christ (e.g. Rom 4:25; Gal 3:12), but that it is not used much elsewhere.

[29] Cf. Collins (1984, 263), who adds, "The prepositional phrase brings a redemptive interpretation to bear upon the death of Jesus. By its use of this interpretative phrase, the death formula proclaims that Jesus' death is not only an historical event (i.e. it happened at a given moment in history), but that it is also an historic event (i.e. that its significance transcends the facticity of the moment)." On the notion of the wrath of God, cf. Malherbe (2000, 122).

[30] 1 Cor. 15:3 confirms this. Malherbe (2000, 300) writes about the phrase, "we might live with him", in 1 Thess 5:10, "By concluding his eschatological section in this way, Paul returns to the themes of 4:13–18 and his purpose in providing his readers with ground for comfort. The death of Christ (4:14) now finds a purpose differently and more explicitly stated: life with him. The theme of being with the Lord (4:14, 17) concludes the larger section, but the ἐσομέθα of 4:17 is changed to ζωσόμεν to add the dimension of life as that in which salvation consists."

5.2.3. *Salvation and the Parousia of the Lord*

The letter to the Thessalonians illuminates the meaning of salvation in a special way through the concept of the *parousia* of Jesus. The point is succinctly put in 1 Thessalonians 5:8 that speaks of the hope of salvation. The *parousia* is often mentioned in the letter,[31] so that it becomes a key motif. It also appears in such seminal passages as 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 3:13; 4:15 and 5:23. According to 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10, to be saved means to be rescued by Jesus from the coming wrath[32] (τὸν ῥυόμενον ἡμὰς ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης). The notion of the *parousia* is implied by the description of "the coming" wrath (ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης).[33] The *parousia* is also suggested in the remark that the faithful are "expecting" (ἀναμένειν) the Son "from heaven" (ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν).

The *parousia* is, however, about more than mere protection from the wrath and thus from the judgment of God. In order to explain this, it is necessary to trace the explicit references to the *parousia* in the letter. Most typical of the verses mentioning the *parousia*, is that they link it with the christological title "Lord". In the last of them, at the end of the letter in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, the title is combined in a climactic manner with "Jesus Christ", emphasizing the use of the title and also the theme of the *parousia*. The *parousia* is all about the return of the Lord. In these verses the Christological title Lord explains Christ as the One who will return to the faithful, to be with them in his eschatological presence. Lord is an apocalyptic title, often used for God, as is clear from its appearance in the apocalyptic discourse in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 and also from its connection with the well-known motif, the day of the Lord (1 Thess 5:2). On this day Jesus appears as Lord in the *parousia*.[34] It marks the beginning of the eternal presence of Christ (ἐσόμεθα σὺν κυρίῳ; 1 Thess

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[31] The coming of Christ is used only in 1 Corinthians 15:23 in a similar sense. Cf. Collins (1984:267).

[32] This phrase is so extraordinary because the motif of the wrath of God appears only three times in Thessalonians and once in Romans 1. What makes this even more significant is that it is God who is normally portrayed in Jewish literature as the Deliverer from the eschatological wrath. Paul here ascribes a function of God to Jesus.

[33] Cf. further Collins (1984, 259).

[34] For a discussion of the term, cf. Malherbe (2000, 291) who observes that it is used in 1 Thess 5:2 as if the readers were familiar with it, "probably because the subject had been part of his (Paul's) original eschatological instruction to them and was a topic under discussion."

4:17). This future presence of the Lord is in a special way linked with the believers. The *parousia* is about being with "our" Lord, that is, about the coming of the Lord to be with 'us' in his salvivic presence (Collins 1984, 268–269). That is why Paul begins this letter with the semantically related expression when he commends the believers in the city in 1 Thessalonians 1:3 for their "steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." He thus, on a macrolevel, frames the letter with references to the future. At the same time, on a microlevel, the hope is the climax of a tripartite combination in which it is placed in the important end position after the elements of "work of faith" and "labour of love." In this way the salvific nature of the *parousia* is underlined and developed further. Christians hope for the *parousia* as the consummation of the salvation that they have appropriated.

5.3. *Salvation and Apocalyptic*

A more general framework within which the *parousia* is given a salvific meaning, needs to be indicated. Jesus, who saves from the coming wrath, is, according to 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10, the Son who will be coming from heaven, but also the Son whom God raised from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus is thus portrayed as foundation for the expectation of the final gift of salvation that will be granted with the *parousia*. The resurrection of Jesus therefore sets in motion a "waiting",[35] "walking" or "living" in expectation of the final outcome of events and of the coming of the Lord as saviour and judge. It is the first apocalyptic event, the first indication of the total renewal and salvation of the world in the age to come. Understood in this way, the resurrection of Christ is embedded in a temporal and cosmological framework that finds its consummation with the *parousia*. It begins the experience of the salvation that will be completed in the age to come (cf. Beker 1980, 154–155).

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[35] Malherbe (2000, 121) notes that this is a *hapax*, but that it relates to the eagerly awaited end mentioned in Rom 8:19, 23, 25; 1 Cor 1:7; Phil 3:20. "The tradition from which he derived the words appears to have been influenced by the LXX, where it is used of waiting with faith and full assurance for God's righteous judgment, mercy and salvation (Jer 13:16; Isa 59:11; Jud 8:17; Sir 2:6–8). Paul thus signals the eschatological interest that will occupy him throughout the letter (2:19; 3:13; 4:13–18; 5:1–11; see esp. Munck 1962; Langevin, 67–73), which may account for the order in which he mentions his preaching, the eschatologically charged claims about Jesus coming in the emphatic position at the end."

The apostolic mission is focused on the proclamation of this apocalyptic gospel as the message of the salvation in Christ. In 1 Thessalonians 2:16, Paul describes his own missionary activity among the gentiles (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) as focused on bringing a message of salvation (λαλῆσαι ἵνα σωθῶσιν) to them. His summary of his own work is therefore presented in soteriological language, which, in turn, is qualified by strong apocalyptic thinking and language.[36] His opponents, who tried to prevent him from proclaiming his message of salvation to the gentiles, is paying the ultimate price: ἔφθασεν δὲ ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἡ ὀργὴ εἰς τέλος! God's wrath has overtaken them forever.[37] They have forfeited their salvation.

Within the larger context of his mission, Paul's letter to the Thessalonians itself functions in an apocalyptic manner. It is written to exhort them to moral conduct that will let them be found blameless at the coming of Christ (cf. 1 Thess 5:23). This letter, like the ministry of Paul, fits into an apocalyptic context and reflects intense apocalyptic contents.

These perspectives illustrate that believers do not only look forward to the future as bringing with it the conclusion and completion of the gift of salvation, but they also look back at the gift of salvation in the resurrection of Jesus that inaugurated the time of the end. It is exactly this apocalyptic understanding of salvation that created a crisis in the community, as is clear from 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18. After some of the believers had died, those who remained behind immediately asked what would happen to them, despairing about their salvation because the *parousia* had not yet taken place. It was so traumatic that Paul had the impression that they grieved like those without any hope (4:13). They had thus given up their expectation of the future salvific presence of the Lord. Their grief reflected disappointment

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[36] The apocalyptic nature of the gospel is evident in such Pauline texts as Gal. 4:4. Cf. also Malherbe (2000, 284). Henneken (1973, 39) describes the salvation of the nations in 1 Thessalonians 2:16 as an action that is thoroughly eschatological. It should not be understood as negative only, in the sense that it means salvation from the coming wrath as is said in 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10. This is expressed clearly in 1 Thessalonians 2:12 where it is said that the Thessalonians are called into his kingdom and glory. It is also evident when Paul remarks that they will be with the Lord (1 Thess 4:14; cf. 5:10). "Die Nähe zum Herrn Jesus Christus ist *das* Heil" (1973, 41).

[37] It is striking that this motif of the wrath of God is so strikingly undeveloped in 1 Thess. In 2 Thessalonians it abounds. In 2 Thess 1:8–9 the vengeance of God and eternal punishment are mentioned in detail. It is worked out even stronger in 2 Thess 2:7–12.

and disillusionment with Paul's apocalyptic message of salvation. They were not prepared for such an event, having been told that their salvation would bring about their future existence with Christ.

In his response to their hopelessness, Paul once again uses apocalyptic formulae to clarify the issue of the *parousia*. In 1 Thessalonians 4:14 he utilizes the death and resurrection of Christ, the heart of the Christian kerugma, to talk about the deceased. They have not lost out on salvation, he argues. They are actually gaining on the living, since the dead in Christ will rise first (1 Thess 4:16). God will bring them with at the *parousia* and reunite them with the living.

This perspective is new to traditional apocalyptic thought. Paul gives the dead preferential status at history's climactic moment. Their tragic deaths are transformed into a good death (Roetzel 1997, 103). Those who died have died in Christ (1 Thess 4:16) therefore they still participate in the community of God the Father. They are not left out or abandoned. Even death cannot take away their salvation. The concepts of the church and salvation are extended beyond the boundaries of death and seen as transcending death.

In this way, salvation, presented in apocalyptic categories, is modified and determined by the Christ events. Ultimately the apocalyptic thought of Paul is Christian in nature. What determines the apocalyptic message is not a fixed apocalyptic thought system, but events in Christ. At the same time it becomes clear how the contingent situation in Thessalonica brought Paul to develop previously neglected or peripheral aspects of the Christian kerugma.

5.4. *Salvation and the "Others"*

In this apocalyptic description other interesting dynamics are developed, also determined by the contingent situation in Thessalonica. This can be best illustrated by investigating Paul's conceptualization of those who have not been saved in Thessalonica. In recent research it has been noted how clues to one's own self-understanding are provided by how one views and names the "other". The negative constructs of their opponents define a people (cf. Roetzel 1997, 104). In this letter, the opponents are under judgment, primarily, as is worked out in 1 Thessalonians 1:9, because of their worshipping of idols.[38] The

[38] Malherbe (2000, 120) notes that the Septuagint made the notion of idols synonymous with false gods, using it for pagan deities.

idols refer unmistakably to the pagan cults in Thessalonica with their many gods. Idolatry was unacceptable because it was seen as the cause of immorality. The link between the two is evident also in 1 Thessalonians 4:1–6, where Paul returns to the subject of idolatry, warning specifically against "Gentiles who do not know God" and who lack sanctification because of their lustful passion. "Conversion from idols to God," writes Malherbe (2000, 120), was for Paul "much more than accepting a theological postulate about monotheism. The worshiper of idols has no knowledge of God or has rejected that knowledge and fallen into bondage to the idols, with dire moral consequences (Rom 1:18–32; Gal 4:8–9)."

In 1 Thessalonians 5:2–11, the "others" are described as being "in darkness",[39] as having fell asleep and as those who are drunk. These passages contain strong warnings against promiscuity that was typical of these cults. By implication, such promiscuity leads to loss of salvation when a holy lifestyle is motivated in 1 Thessalonians 5:9, as needed in order "to obtain (εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας) salvation."

This delineation of the "others" defines the Thessalonians as a close group of those who desire to be blameless at the *parousia* (1 Thess 3:13; cf. 4:7; 5:23). The holy lifestyle will protect this group, who belong to the day (1 Thess 5:8), from the anger or wrath of God at the *parousia*. That is why they as a small group must "encourage one another and build up each other" (1 Thess 5:11). The notion of salvation is developed in this way by contrasting the faithful with those who are of the night or of darkness (1 Thess 5:5).

5.5. *Salvation As Integration into the Family of God*

It would not have escaped the notice of the church in Thessalonians how Paul, the apostle who so powerfully shared the gospel with them that they were willing to break with integral elements of their trusted social identity, has accepted them in this letter as part of a new family. In the transition from their gentile context to their new situation, Paul describes them as having been saved into a new community similar to that of a family. Their traditional relationships had been

[39] Malherbe (2000, 293) draws attention to the fact that the contrasts between night and day, darkness and light to describe the human condition were widespread in philosophy and religion.

fundamentally transformed, as is indicated by this language.[40] This needs closer investigation.

5.5.1. *The Believers as Siblings*

That the Thessalonians have been saved into a new family is clear from the intense way in which the familial term ἀδελφοί is used to address them in important places in the letter, implicitly delineating their special new identity and status as believers.[41] The address plays a seminal role in the letter and reflects important thinking about the intimate relationship between the faithful. Cousar (1996, 30) writes, "The direct address 'brothers and sisters',[42] which is coupled with the introductory formula and also appears repeatedly through the body of Paul's letters (i.e. the section between the opening and closing), should not be dismissed as a mere formality. The use of familial language balances the leadership language with which the letters often begin ('apostle of Jesus Christ'). Unfortunately, the NRSV sometimes translates the Greek *adelphoi* as 'beloved' or 'friends,' rather than 'brothers and sisters,' losing the familial character of the word. On the one hand, Paul claims apostolic authority, indicating the special responsibility he carries with regard to the churches. On the other hand, he acknowledges the common spiritual generation he shares with his readers, resulting in an unusual combination of authority and equality."

Malherbe (2000, 110) points out that in this short letter, Paul uses the word and its cognate 17 times so it cannot be a mere epistolary

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[40] Roetzel (1997, 100), discussing Peterson's study about how the kinship cluster of metaphors informs and redirects traditional master-slave metaphors, notes how Paul made Philemon as slave-holder and Onesimus as slave metaphorically freedmen in Christ. Freedom in Christ fundamentally changed the relationship between them. In the case of 1 Thessalonians the family "is constitutive of the elect, and the elect are constituted by God as a family. The metaphors interact, and each enriches the other."

[41] The word "brothers" is a significant marker in this letter. The United Bible Societies edition of the Greek text has five sections and five of them begin with the address "brothers". How important the word can be, is illustrated in the discussion of 1 Thess 5:4 by Malherbe (2000, 293). The word establishes "a warmer tone than that of the preceding verse. Paul begins the exhortation with a reassuring affirmation of their true identity, which will provide the basis for that exhortation."

[42] Roetzel (1997, 99) explains why ἀδελφοί should be read inclusively. Acknowledging the male character of Paul's language, in line with that of his time, he records how this maleness is deconstructed by such texts like Gal. 3:28–29. At the same time, certain texts reveal Paul's appreciation for the leadership of women in the early church (Rom 16:1, 3, 7; 1 Cor. 11:5).

convention. He uses it more than in any of his other letters. Following Schäfer, he observes that it is "an important part of the fictive kinship that Paul develops in this letter and elsewhere." Behind his use of the word is the experience of the proselyte who moved from his previous relationship to a new, different Jewish community. Paul applies this term in order to integrate the gentiles in their new Christian community.

The empowerment of the Thessalonians is evident in many ways in this letter, for example, in their intimate relationship with Paul and their sharing of the same fate. When Paul addresses them as brothers, he is stressing that they share not only suffering and persecution, that they are not only sharing the same faith and fate, but that they have together become members of a new family. To be established as a new family, as brothers, is a direct consequence of salvation and is, at the same time, an experience of salvation. Salvation, given in Christ who died "for us" requires that that we "live with Him" and respond to the gift by mutual support and building up. That is why he can address them in 1 Thessalonians 1:4 as "brothers and sisters" who are "beloved by God". That is also why, as a family of the beloved of God, they support each other (1 Thess 5:11).[43]

5.5.2. *God as the Father*

Paul describes God as "Father" in line with the intimate, familial link between the apostle and the church and between believers mutually. In 1 Thessalonians 1:1, the description of God as Father is almost formulaic, but the phrases in 1 Thessalonians 3:11, ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ ἡμῶν and in 1 Thessalonians 3:13, ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν, stressing through the addition of the pronouns the familial links between the faithful, portray them as "children" of God. In these seminal verses (1 Thess 3:11–13; the *propositio*) with their double reference to God as Father, the believers are described in the climactic description of verse 13 as those belonging to a Father. They also belong to Christ, preparing themselves for the *parousia* of Christ which, in 1 Thessalonians 5:8–9, is seen as a gift from their Father.

Of special interest here is 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10, where God is implicitly described as Father by the reference to his "Son" whom

[43] Reese (1979, 60) describes this as an expression of trust, spelling out the saving significance of the passion of Jesus for them.

God resurrected from the dead. Collins (1984, 256–257) draws attention to the many commentators that find the reference to "Son" here striking. It appears in the Pauline corpus only fifteen times (compare to the 198 times for Lord and 270 times for Christ). Some have tried to explain the reference as a residue from the *Traditionsgeschichte* of the text, originally reflecting the use of a Jewish Son of man saying that Paul modified in a Hellenistic setting and that he incorporated in the apocalyptic setting of these verses. Such an interpretation may illuminate the pre-history of the term, but in its present setting its meaning is decisively determined by the familial terminology in the letter. The description of Jesus as Son has to do with the underlying notion of salvation that perceives the faithful are being saved into the new family of God. "The thin network of tiny Pauline cells"[44] (Meeks 1983, 169) regarded themselves as the creation of the only true God who was revealed as their Father through the Son, Jesus. They expressed their identity as the saved children and brothers in their new family, the household of God in this way.[45] Though a small minority, they could maintain their identity because of this new support they enjoyed in the special structures of their new family.

6. Conclusion

The salvific language in 1 Thessalonians functions to reinforce the believers in their original decision for Christ and against their past idolatry, at the same time strengthening their self-understanding as a group of people destined to be with Christ at the *parousia*. By giving an apocalyptic colour to the notion of salvation, Paul reinforces

[44] Paul emphasizes the link between the Thessalonians and their fellow believers in Macedonia, Achaia and in Judea (2:14) in order to remind them that they were part of an extended network of believers. Malherbe (2000, 130), following Riesner, writes, "To be reminded of this would be of no little significance to a small band of Christians who may have felt abandoned by Paul and always faced the danger of being swallowed by the larger society."

[45] "Within the immediate task of Paul and his associates . . . confession of the one God had as its primary implication the consciousness of unity and singularity of the Christian groups themselves" (Meeks 1983, 169). They must live a peaceful common life. The method of comparing parts of 1 Thessalonians with the context of the Thessalonian believers was promoted by Meeks who states, "First it was necessary to describe as fully as possible both the social milieu and the internal social forms of the communities, so that we can hold that context firmly in mind as we now try to supply *the lines and shadows of doctrine*" (1983, 164).

the notion that the Christian church is a unique, cohesive group saved from a pagan context and consequently from the wrath of God that pagans will incur.

Traditional apocalyptic language about the wrath of God is linked in this letter to a specific gentile context. At the same time, the traditional language also obtains a radically new character when it is combined with the death and resurrection of Christ as model for the death and resurrection of those who died in Thessalonica.[46] This combination intensifies the apocalyptic language, relates it even more to the situation of the readers and functions to produce a disposition to act in a way appropriate to the community's well-being. Meeks (1983, 173) writes generally about apocalyptic language in Paul, "The new myth may be very conservative, in the sense that it reinforces the new relationships of power and the new ethos within the movement at the same time that it negates for group members the world view held by the dominant society." With these remarks he opens new avenues for understanding what is happening in Thessalonians. The church in Thessalonians is learning through the apocalyptizing of soteriology that the new relations they find themselves in are as powerful as the previous ones. They must not fall back into old patterns of behaviour, because it will mean that they forfeit the promise of salvation. At the same time, it motivates them to continue in their rejection of their pagan past, even though they are in a clear minority. The price that they are paying in terms of being ostracized is nothing compared to what can be gained in the end.

Already in the oldest of the New Testament documents, it is clear how the early Christian proclamation was focused on contextualising the message of salvation. The message of salvation was expressed in language that was accessible to those who became converts, but it was more so formulated in a way to support and encourage them in their time of crisis. Having given up their safe surroundings to venture in the unknown territory of the new family of God in Jesus, the new converts had to be integrated into a new lifestyle and be exhorted not to falter after the first decisive steps had been taken. In order to do so, the character of God, the life, death, resurrection and *parousia*

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[46] Meeks remarks that the most fascinating aspect of a millenarian group is "to combine the traditional with the radically new" (1983, 173). Traditional symbols are reinterpreted in a new age ("apocalyptic and the management of innovation"). This happens also in 1 Thessalonians.

of Christ, as well as the church as the new household of God, is portrayed in salvific terms. Paul uses traditional Jewish apocalyptic thought, but also takes over early Christian tradition in order to reassure the young converts in Thessalonica that they are on the right track. Behind this letter stands the powerful figure of Paul, the missionary, who understood the gospel of Christ primarily as the gospel of salvation. He understood how foundational this gospel was for the life of the church confounded by and in their crisis and how seminal it was to encourage believers to sever the strong ties that bound them to their promiscuous and pagan past. He also understood that this gospel of salvation is decisively determined by the fact that it is based on the loving outreach of the living and true God.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

"CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS": SOTERIOLOGY IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

Abraham J. Malherbe
Emeritus Yale Divinity School

1. Introduction

The above quotation of 1 Tim 1:15 could stand as a short formula for NT soteriology in general (Söding 2000, 183). On the face of it, there is nothing really exceptional about it, and the soteriology of the Pastoral Epistles (henceforth PE) has, until recently, generally shared in the low esteem in which other theological aspects of the letters have been held.[1] One commentator's assessment is representative of many others. A. T. Hanson considers the author of the letters unoriginal, dependent on traditions, including liturgical and hymnic formulas which he presents without working them into a consistent whole. So, for example, the author of the PE describes both God and Christ as Saviour, the reason being that he "expresses his doctrine of Christ by using titles for him rather than by expounding an ontological and soteriological theory" (Hanson 1982, 39). The author was not only not conscious of the implications of the traditions he used, "One cannot help suspecting that Paul's profound doctrine of the cross was simply too deep for the author of the Pastorals" (Hanson 1982, 42).

1.1. *Overview of the Soteriology of the Pastoral Epistles*

The soteriology of the PE can easily be outlined as is done below. That is not to say that it is equally easy to discern whether the individual elements dealing with salvation cohere in a systematic whole, or, absent such coherence, whether any particular element dominates

[1] See Brox (1989, 232–233); Donelson (1986, 135–141); Young (1994, 50–55); cf. Roloff (1988, 363–365).

or any theme pervades the letters. Often, the doctrine in the PE is made to suffer by comparing it negatively with Paul's teaching on salvation, and even a rapid survey reveals that we have to do with a mélange of Pauline and non-Pauline elements.

According to the PE, God wants all people to be saved (1 Tim 2:4; 4:10), but focuses on those who have believed (1 Tim 4:10). God is named Saviour (1Tim 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Tit 1:3), as is Jesus Christ (2 Tim 1:10; Tit 1:4; 2:13; 3:6), and it is not immediately clear what the role of each is in the salvation of mankind.

The theology of the PE is fundamentally theocentric. God is concerned with the salvation of all people, and he allowed his saving grace to appear in Christ (Roloff 1988, 363–365). It is claimed that the PE subordinate Christology to an epiphany scheme (see below), so that it loses its soteriological independence and merely fills a functional role in a system of salvation that preserves the total transcendence of God. According to this view, soteriology has returned to the doctrine of God, which means that the Christ event, stripped of its own import, now merely has the function of announcing God's universal scheme of salvation (Hasler 1977, 197, 202–203).[2]

There is, however, much more to the soteriology of the letters than could be inferred from this characterisation. The heretofore prevailing view, that there is no cogent, systematic theology in the PE, but that the author uses pre-Pauline, Pauline and other material in a sometimes haphazard way for different purposes,[3] has recently been challenged. It has been argued, for instance, that, while the Christological statements in the PE do not cohere in a closely knit conception, there is a unifying theme, namely soteriology, that unites them (Läger 1996, esp. 175–180; cf. Söding 2000, 183). Indeed, a summary of the soteriology of the PE can begin with the observation that the PE present Jesus Christ as the sole mediator between God the Saviour and mankind, who gave himself as a ransom to redeem us from iniquity (1 Tim 2:3–6; cf. Tit 2:14), and it is through faith in him that people are saved (1 Tim 1:16; 2 Tim 3:15; cf. Tit 3:8: faith in God).

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[2] Donelson (1986, 139): "Jesus receives the title savior only in the midst of descriptions of the plan of salvation and only when the effects of his epiphany are being described. In fact, the three major passages in the Pastorals which paint the details of the salvation schema, the cosmological side of the οἰκονομία θεοῦ, are 2 Tim 1.9–10; Tit 2.11–14; and Tit 3.4–7."

[3] The thorough analysis by Windisch (1935) has been the most influential presentation of the evidence in support of this argument.

Yet salvation depends on God's own purpose, kindness and grace, not on human works (2 Tim 1:9; Tit 3:4–7; see Söding 2000, 182–184). It is not human righteousness, evinced in good works done, that brings about salvation; rather, it is God's mercy, which saves through the washing of regeneration (παλιγγενεσία), that is, baptism, and renewal of the Holy Spirit (Tit 3:5), so that justification rests on God's grace (Tit 3:7). But, by saving people, Jesus creates a people of his own who are eager for good works (Tit 2:14), and they are urged to perform such works (Tit 3:14), which are profitable or useful to all people (Tit 3:8).

Salvation can thus be conceived of as a past event (Tit 3:5) or something that can be acquired in the present (1 Tim 4:16). There is also a future dimension to salvation, described variously as eternal life (1 Tim 3:7; cf. 1:2), to be laid hold of in the present (1 Time 6:12; perhaps v. 19), the crown of righteousness to be bestowed when the Lord appears (2 Tim 4:8), and the heavenly kingdom (2 Tim 4:18).

Paul and the church also have a role to play in the plan of God the Saviour. Paul is himself the paradigm of those who are saved by God's mercy and grace, who believe in God for eternal life (1 Tim 1:12–17). Paul endures "everything for the sake of the elect, that they may obtain the salvation which in Christ Jesus goes with eternal glory" (2 Tim 2:10). Timothy, too, by his own conduct and teaching will save himself and his hearers (1 Tim 4:16).

1.2. *A New Proposal*

This canvass of the soteriology of the PE, overly brief as it is, draws attention to some major elements of the doctrine, and, of particular interest to this paper, to the title of Saviour as applied to God and Christ. One needs to beware of focusing on titles when dealing with Christology,[4] but in the case of the PE, it is essential to examine the appellation in the greatest detail. The treatment below will attempt to demonstrate that the title is part of the texture of the larger theology of the letters. What Leander Keck says about Christology applies equally to soteriology, and particularly to the soteriology of the PE. He describes Christology as "the discourse by means of which Christians account for what they believe they have experienced, and will experience through Jesus Christ (liberation, new life, forgiveness)

[4] See, for example, de Jonge (1988, 19, *passim*); Dahl (1991).

customarily understood as 'salvation' (Greek, σωτηρία)." In a coherent Christology, there is a correlation between the identity of the person of Christ and his saving work. Christ does not stand alone, but is understood (Keck 1999, 193; see already 1986, 362–365):

> . . . in specific relationships or correlations . . . the coherence of Christology refers to the requirement that the correlations be appropriate, that they make sense conceptually. Since the cure must fit the disease, the salvation effected by Jesus Christ must be correlated appropriately with the understanding of the human condition. In other words, the soteriological correlate implies an anthropology, and vice versa. Thus, if the human condition is essentially ignorance and folly, what is needed is instruction and wisdom. There is then no need for forgiveness-unless; of course, ignorance and folly are understood as sin against God. But then more is required than instruction and wisdom.

The same can be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of God as Saviour.

The way the soteriology of the PE fulfils the requirements stated by Keck can be discerned through close examination of major Christological passages in the letters. Two passages, Titus 2:11–14 and 3:3–7, are of major significance, augmented by a third, 2 Tim 1:9–11. The two passages in Titus will serve as windows through which to view the soteriology of the letters.

2. Trained by the Saving Grace of God, Titus 2:11–14

2.1. *Form and Origin of the Pericope and Its Language*

This major Christological and soteriological passage is a literary period, one long sentence consisting of a number of clauses that describe in brief God's salvific work. It ends with the eschatological waiting of the people Christ purified for himself, who are to be zealous to do good works.

11 Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις του θεοῦ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις
12 παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς,
ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας
σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι,
13 προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαιρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς
δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,
14 ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν
ἵνα λυτρώσηται ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας
καὶ καθαρίσῃ ἑαυτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον,
ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων.

The literary limits of the passage are clearly marked by γάρ in v. 11 and λάλει καὶ παρακάλει καὶ ἔλεγχε in v. 15. The self-contained passage, tightly structured, contains some obviously traditional material (e.g., v. 14; cf. Mark 10:45b). The passage has, not surprisingly, been thought to be liturgical in origin, more precisely, a baptismal or eucharistic hymn (e.g., Holtz 1972, 224–229). Such an origin is highly unlikely, for the passage contains elements that are integral to both the theology of the PE and the literary context in which it appears.[5] Coming towards the end of the three letters, the author in Tit 2:11–14 and 3:4–7 composed two passages which contain salient points made throughout the preceding eleven chapters of the three letters.

2.2. *The Epiphany of the Saviour's Saving Grace*

The sentence begins with ἐπεφάνη, repeated in the noun form in v. 13, to introduce a passage whose subject is salvation (σωτήριος, σωτήρ, λυτρόομαι). The notion of epiphany appears in all three of the PE (1 Tim 6:14; 2 Tim 4:1, 8), especially in connection with salvation (1 Tim 1:9, 10; Titus 2:11, 13; 3:4). Attempts have been made to discover the *religionsgeschichtliche* background of ἐπιφάνεια in order to cast light on its meaning in the PE.[6] For the most part, it is the Hellenistic background that has been thought most relevant to the PE, and specifically, the use of the term to describe the unexpected, visible intrusion of the gods in human affairs (Pax 1955), and eventually its use in connection with a cult. The word group is also associated with σωτήρ, and the combination was used in veneration of the emperor. According to the influential commentary by Dibelius and Conzelmann, the author of the PE uses this elevated, formulaic, commonplace language to give a Hellenistic cast to his own (Dibelius and Conzelmann 1972, 100–105, 143–146). More recently, however, the immediate background to the PE's use of the word group has been thought to be 2 Maccabees, which speaks repeatedly of divine manifestations by which God helps Israel in times of need (Lau 1996; see 2 Macc. 3:24–28; 5:2–4; 12:22; 14:15; 15:27).

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[5] Marshall (1999, 262–266), provides a judicious weighing of the evidence *pro* and *con*.

[6] See Marshall (1999, 287–296), for an assessment of this enterprise, and Oberlinner 1980, for a more independent interpretation. The inscriptional evidence is frequently adduced and claims made for its importance in clarifying the Christology of the PE. See, for example, Bultmann-Lührmann, (1974, 8–9); Hasler (1977); Oberlinner (1980).

It is not necessary at the moment to adjudicate between these claims; it is sufficient for our purposes to agree with the claim that epiphany language always describes the helpful intervention of a divine power (Lührmann 1971). That is the case with the PE, as its association with salvation demonstrates.

Of special relevance is 2 Tim 1:8–10, the only passage outside Titus where epiphany language is used in connection with salvation:

> . . . the power of God, who saved (σώσαντος) us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and grace (κατὰ ἰδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν), which he gave us in Christ ages ago, and now has manifested (φανερωθεῖσαν) through the appearance of our Saviour Christ Jesus (διὰ τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, who abolished death and brought life and immortality through the gospel.

Here ἐπιφάνεια refers to the manifestation of the earthly Jesus, but elsewhere it has an eschatological reference (1 Tim 6:14; 2 Tim 4:1, 8), to the *Parousia*, a term that is however not used in the PE.

The word ἐπιφάνεια is used in both senses in Tit 2:11, 13. Christians live between these two manifestations by virtue of the manifestation of God's grace in Christ. It is to be noted that in Tit 2:11 (and 3:4) the first manifestation is not described as that of Christ as in 2 Tim 1:10, but of a divine quality, God's saving grace. This does not mean that the manifestation of these qualities is separate from, or other than Christ's appearance, only that the author focuses on the qualities because they have special significance in their contexts in the Epistle to Titus.

The striking phrase, the saving grace of God (ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ σωτήριος), begins an extraordinarily compact summary of the PE's view of salvation. Much attention has also been focused on the derivation of σωτήρ. The OT describes God as Saviour, and Christian use can be traced to the formulaic use of Hellenistic Judaism. That cannot be said of the designation of Jesus as Saviour; for there is no evidence that the Messiah was called Saviour in Judaism. One must therefore look to the Greek world, and once again the emperor cult is thought to be the source for the language.[7]

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[7] The most comprehensive treatment now is that by Jung (2000), which is useful for laying out the inscriptional evidence for the hypothesis of the emperor cult. Karrer (2002) provides a good analysis of the evidence, but concentrates on the power of Christ the Saviour in overcoming death (2 Tim 1:10). Böttrich (2000)

There is no persuasive argument against appealing to the cultural and social contexts of the PE to aid our understanding of the letters and of this passage in particular. But, in deciding where to go for enlightenment, one should begin with the passage itself, in its literary context, and with the function it performs in that context. The danger should be avoided of isolating a term or two, for which parallels are then sought here and there in Graeco-Roman sources; rather, a preliminary attempt must be made to discern the complex of thought of which the terminology is an integral part in the PE. With such a preliminary, heuristic description to guide and discipline the investigation, one may then approach the larger cultural context for what it may contribute to our understanding. That method will be applied here, beginning with a brief survey of Titus up to the point of the soteriological passage, 2:11–14.

2.2.1. *The Context in the Epistle to Titus*

The Epistle to Titus is frequently described as being, like 1 Timothy, a rudimentary church order; in fact, its main purpose, broadly speaking, is moral exhortation, and its style, more precisely, is paraenetic. While 2:1–3:8 is usually considered *Gemeindeparänese* (Dibelius and Conzelmann, 5; Oberlinner 1996, 102; Bassler 1996, 191), Hellenistic paraenetic features in fact occur throughout the entire letter.[8] The philophronetic tone characteristic of paraenesis describes the author's relationship with his putative reader, and the inelegant syntax, with short sentences, frequent imperatives, virtue and vice lists, proverbial and gnomic statements (e.g., 1:12, 15), use of personal example (2:7), antithesis, the concern with deeds that are καλὰ καὶ ὠφέλιμα (3:8), are all characteristic of paraenesis. So also is the confidence that exudes from the letter—that its directions are irrefutable, and that, despite the presumption that what is inculcated is self-evidently right, generally accepted and generally applicable, the individual directions assume a larger, coherent intellectual framework that inform them, even if that framework is not explicitly appealed to.[9] An awareness of these characteristics of Hellenistic paraenesis will give texture to a description of the literary context of Titus 2:11–14.

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examines what he claims to be the liturgical use of κύριος and other terms he considers equivalents.

[8] See Abraham J. Malherbe, "Paraenesis in the Epistle to Titus", where the evidence is presented in full.

[9] The evidence is presented in Malherbe (1989, 129–136).

The following brief sketch of Titus draws attention to features of special interest to the elucidation of 2:11–14. After a long salutation (1:1–4), the author foregoes the thanksgiving period customary in most of Paul's letters, and gets straight to the point: Titus is to set right what has gone awry in Crete by appointing presbyters/bishops, whose qualifications are detailed in the form of a virtue list (1:5–9a). The antithetic style in which the qualifications are given (μὴ . . . μὴ . . . μὴ . . . ἀλλά), is characteristic of paraenesis and the content of the list likewise is at home in the moralist literature. The list shares much with a similar one in 1 Tim 3:1–7, but differs from it in a significant way. In 1 Tim 3:2, the qualification that the bishop be διδακτικός appears toward the beginning of the list, while in Tit 1:9 it crowns the list and is expanded, ἵνα δυνατὸς ᾖ καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαινούσῃ καὶ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν.

2.2.2. *The Human Condition and Its Cure*

The reason why the elder/bishop is to be proficient in sound orthodox teaching is then given: there are many nefarious persons, whose characters the author limns by means of a vice list, which describes them as antisocial and, above all, subverting entire households (1:10–12).

The author then turns to Titus's responsibilities, which are similar to those of the elders (1:13–16), but here the emphasis is on the diseased condition of the heretics' minds and consciences (μεμίανται αὐτῶν καὶ ὁ νοῦς καὶ ἡ συνείδησις, v. 15). Titus's rebuke is to make them sound or healthy in the faith (ἵνα ὑγιαινῶσιν ἐν τῃς πίστει, v. 13). As it is, their diseased condition is accompanied by works that deny God; indeed, they are incapable of any good deed (v. 16). This language of disease and health is used in the other PE as well, and is also derived from the moral philosophers, as will become clear. The heretics are said, for example, to be puffed up and to understand nothing; on the contrary, they are diseased (νοσῶν) and defiled in mind (διεφθαρμένων ἀνθρώπων τὸν νοῦν) and thus deprived of the truth (1 Tim 6:4–5). Heretical teaching will eat its way like gangrene into their hearers (2 Tim 2:17). The putrid condition of such minds produces bellicosity and such other antisocial vices as envy, dissension, slander, suspicions and wrangling, and destroy domestic order and tranquillity.

The condition of the heretics, we shall see, is similar to that of people before they believed and came to a knowledge of the truth. In

the PE, this condition is dismayingly pessimistic, and is repeatedly delineated with long lists of vices (e.g., 1 Tit 1:9–10; 6:3–5; 2 Tim 3:1–5). It is caused by a cognitive deficiency (1 Tim 4:1–2; 6:4, 5; 2 Tim 3:8), which makes them oppose the διδασκαλικὴ ὑγιής (1 Tim 1:10; 6:3). This explains the emphasis in the PE on the importance of teaching, both that of the orthodox church and of the heretics.[10] Orthodox teaching is the tradition that is handed down from generation to generation (2 Tim 2:1–2). In contrast to the heretics, Timothy, for example, is to continue in the tradition of which Scripture is part (2 Tim 3:14–17):

> But as for you, continue in what you have learned (ἔμαθες) and have firmly believed, knowing (εἰδώς) from whom you learned it (ἔμαθες) and how from childhood you have known (οἶδας) the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation (σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν) through faith in Jesus Christ. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμόν, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἵνα ἄρτιος ᾖ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος, πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρτισμένος).

The OT does not play a major role in the PE. Reference to it here mainly serves to stress its part in the normative tradition that has been received (cf. v. 14 with 1:5), and the cognitive aspects associated with it. Noteworthy for our purpose too, is the moralists' language where Scripture's usefulness for psychagogy is described (vv. 16–17).[11]

2.2.3. *The Social Dimension of Sound Teaching*

In contrast (Σὺ δέ) to the intellectually and morally ill people described in 1:10–16, Titus is commanded to teach what befits sound or healthy teaching (ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαινούσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ, 2:1), which in 3:8 is described as good works, which are καλὰ καὶ ὠφέλιμα to people. This teaching is then summarised in 2:1–10, in a list of responsibilities of members of the community, which is a development of the Hellenistic

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[10] Of the heretics: ἑτεροδιδάσκω (1 Tim 1:3; 6:3); διδάσκω (2 Tim 2:2; Titus 1:11); διδάσκαλος (2 Tim 4:3); νομοδιδάσκαλος (1 Tim 1.7). Of the church and its leaders: διδάσκω (1 Tim 4:11; 6:2); (2 Tim 4:2; Tit 1:9); διδακτικός (1 Tim 3:2; 2 Tim 2:24); διδασκαλία (1 Tim 1:10; 4:1, 6, 13; 5:17; 6:1, 3; 2 Tim 3:10, 16; 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1, 7, 10); διδάσκαλος (1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11). The teaching of the orthodox is the only foundation for the moral life.

[11] For the use of such terms in psychagogy, see Malherbe (2000, esp. 308–327).

household codes adopted and adapted in Eph 5:22–6:8; Col 3:18–4:1; 1 Pet 2:13–3:7. This list takes up successively the behaviour of older men, older women (and secondarily, younger women), young men, Titus himself, and slaves.

There is very little in this list that is specifically Christian: only in vv. 6 and 10 is God mentioned. The behaviour that is commanded is similar to that of the philosophic moral tradition, as is evident, for example, from the explicit statements about the positive response it should elicit from non-Christians (e.g., Tit 2:5, 9, 10; cf. 1 Tim 3:7). Yet, although in the conclusion of the section it is only said of slaves that in their entire conduct they are to adorn the teaching of God their Saviour among all people (or in all respects; τὴν διδασκαλίαν τὴν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ κοσμῶσιν ἐν πᾶσιν), according to the sentiment of the PE, it applies to all Christians.[12] We should not, however, be overwhelmed by the similarities between Christian and pagan behaviour, for in 2 Tim 3:12 it is said that all who live εὐσεβῶς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ will be persecuted, so the author does retain some sense of a difference between Christian morality and that of the larger society.

2.2.4. *The Theological Warrant for Social Teaching*

The theological warrant for what Titus is to teach is given in 2:11–14. The connection of this passage with what precedes is evident from γάρ, which connects God's saving grace and instruction with v. 10. Verses 11–14 are an elaboration of "the teaching of God our Saviour" in v. 10, and describe how God saves. Verses 11 and 12 do so in terms largely derived from the philosophical traditions which the author has used to describe the human condition that can only be rectified by correct teaching. A recognition of these traditions will allow us to see the contours of the soteriology of the PE more clearly, as we take account both of what the PE and the philosophers share and how they differ.

2.2.4.1. Salvation Through Education

Discussions on the background of σωτήρ in the PE have, especially because of its association with ἐπιφάνεια, concentrated on the impe-

[12] For the image of adornment, see also 1 Tim 2:9. It is also a philosophical commonplace that virtues are the true adornment; see Seneca, *Ep.* 13.15; Philo, *Sacr.* 26; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* 39B; Ps. Crates, *Ep.* 9.

rial cult, and neglected the philosophical background.[13] It is, however, philosophical traditions that the author uses to describe the human condition and salvation from it, and an awareness of them will help to clarify the soteriology expressed in Tit 2:11–14.

The author knows of grace in the Pauline sense of God's free gift for our benefit (see Titus 3:7), so one is struck by the combination of χάρις σωτήριος with the notion of παιδεία, whose goal is described negatively (renouncing vices) and positively (living virtuously). Here we are knee-deep in philosophical formulations.

The philosophers, and particularly the Stoics, likened human emotions to diseases,[14] and the extent to which their thinking and language was spread is richly illustrated by Philo of Alexandria. Philo thought of the soul as having two characters, the senior character honouring the cardinal virtues of wisdom, temperance, justice, courage, and virtue (φρόνησις, σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη, ἀνδρεία, ἀρετή), and the junior honouring such things as wealth, reputation, office and good birth. The soul is in a state of war, not yet completely purified (μήπω κεκαθαρμένην), its passions and diseases still prevailing over its healthy reasonings (τῶν παθῶν καὶ νοσημάτων παρευημερούντων τοὺς ὑγιαίνοντας λόγους, *Abr.* 217–223).

People find themselves in this condition because of their wilful ignorance, their failure to live according to reason. When passion in the soul rages savagely, the philosophers said, and produces itches and ticklings which arise from lust and indulgence, and if some vice spreads like festering shingles, it should be healed with some curative drug (σωτήριον φάρμακον) or be cut out with professional skill with the scalpel of sharp reason (Philo, *Det.* 110). It is the philosopher who cures, through diet and cautery (Seneca, *Ep.* 75.6–7). Like a physician, who works for the benefit (ὠφέλεια) of his patient, the philosopher's concern is for the cure (σωτηρία) of his hearers (Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 32.10, 18). The idea was widespread that the philosophic teacher saved people, which is to say, helped them to conquer vice (Ps. Diogenes, *Ep.* 5; Ps. Socrates, *Ep.* 6.6). The philosopher can therefore be called σωτήρ (Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 32.17–18), for

[13] For example, in Karrer (2002), philosophy is mentioned in one sentence and receives four lines in a footnote (157), and in a book of 404 pages, Jung (2000) devotes slightly more than one page (95–96) to one philosopher, Epicurus.

[14] See Cicero, *Tusc.* 4.10–13, 23–24, 27, 32–33, and the comments by Hadot (1969, 142–146).

he cures. It is of the greatest importance, then, that people listen to what is useful and salutary (χρήσιμον καὶ σωτήριον, Plutarch, *Adol. poet. aud.* 14F), even if the philosopher's frank speech, like effective medicine, may be painful, for it has a salutary and benign (σωτήριον . . . καὶ κηδεμονικόν) effect (Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* 59D; cf. *Virt. mort.* 452D).

Described otherwise, still like physicians, they engage in a παιδεία that leads to true happiness, teaching the cardinal virtues of temperance, manliness and justice (σωφροσύνη, ἀνδρεία, δικαιοσύνη, Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 13.31–32). A proper education is the source and root of all goodness, and people ought to cling to uncorrupted and sound education (παιδείας . . . ἀδιαφθόρου καὶ ὑγιαινούσης, Ps. Plutarch, *Lib. ed.* 6A). Dio Chrysostom (*Or.* 32.15–16) provides a short summary of the entire matter:

> For it is through man's folly (ἄγνοια) and love of luxury (τρυφή) and ambition (φιλοτιμίαν), that life comes to be vexatious (δυσχερής) and full of deceit (ἀπάτης), wickedness (πονηρίας), and countless other ills (κακά). However, for these maladies one remedy and cure has been provided by the gods, to wit, education and reason (παιδείαν καὶ λόγον), and the man who throughout life employs that remedy with consistency comes at last to a healthy, happy end (πρὸς τὸ τέλος ὑγιὲς καὶ εὔδαιμον).

The philosophical education in mind does not deal with theoretical matters so much as practical ones. This is evident in the way the cardinal virtues have appeared in the texts alluded to or cited above. It is most explicit in the following statement on education (Ps. Plutarch, *Lib. ed.* 7 D–F):

> Wherefore it is necessary to make philosophy as it were the head and front of all education (παιδείας). For as regards the care of the body men have discovered two sciences, the medical and the gymnastic, of which the one implants health, the other sturdiness, in the body; but for the illnesses and affections of the mind philosophy alone is the remedy. For through philosophy and in company with philosophy it is possible to attain knowledge of what is honourable and what is shameful, what is just and what is unjust, what, in brief, is to be chosen and what to be avoided, how a man must bear himself in relation to the gods, with his parents, with his elders, with the laws, with strangers, with those in authority, with friends, with women, with children, with servants; that one ought to reverence the gods, to honour one's parents, to respect one's elders, to be obedient to the laws, to yield to those in authority, to love one's friends, to be chaste with wisdom, to be affectionate with children, and not to be overbearing with slaves; and, most important of all, not to be over joyful at success or over-

> much distressed at misfortune, not to be dissolute in pleasures, nor impulsive and brutish in temper. These things I regard as pre-eminent among all the advantages that accrue from philosophy.

The similarities between the philosophical background and Tit 2:11 are striking, and extend to v. 12, where the twofold goal of the divine παιδεία is stated, to bring about renunciation of vices (ἀσέβεια and κοσμικαὶ ἐπιθυμίαι) in order to live virtuously (σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς).

The human condition from which people are saved is immorality. It is here described as godlessness and worldly desires (ἀσέβεια καὶ κοσμικαὶ ἐπιθυμίαι). Both terms have moral connotations,[15] and as we have seen above, share much with the philosophers' conception of the irrational life. The condition is starkly painted in the PE with long lists of vices which describe heretics and unbelievers alike (e.g., 1 Tim 1:8–10; 6:3–5). Heretics, it is said ironically, will "progress" ever more in godlessness (ἐπὶ πλεῖον γὰρ προκόψουσιν ἀσεβείᾳ, 2 Tim 2:16). They have a form of εὐσέβεια but deny its power (2 Tim 3:5, 7), an association also made in Ps. Plato, *Def.* 412E, which thinks of εὐσέβεια as a δύναμις θεραπευτικὴ θεῶν ἑκούσιος, and in Hellenistic Judaism (e.g., Ep. *Aris.* 229; Wis. 10:12). What heretic and unbeliever share is that they do not hold to the ὑγιαινούσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ, and therefore lack the capacity to live morally.

2.2.4.2. The Moral Goal of Divine Education

The goal of the divine παιδεία is identified positively, to live virtuously, described with a triad of virtues in which the presence of εὐσεβῶς is noteworthy. In this, the author is like Philo, who adds εὐσέβεια to the standard Stoic virtues.[16] Lucian, too, adds εὐσέβεια to σωφροσύνη and δικαιοσύνη, to which he then appends other noble qualities, all of which he describes as adornments with which the soul is adorned (*Somn.* 10).

We should not, however, uncritically focus too narrowly on the similarities, for the addition of ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι to the description of the "virtuous" life, in which the saving grace educates in v. 12, alerts us to the fact that we are dealing with a different perspective, even

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[15] The latter obviously so. See 2 Tim 2:15–16 for the heretics' ἀσέβεια, and the list of vices in 3:2–5, and holding to a form of εὐσέβεια but denying its power. Cf also Philo *Det.* 72.

[16] E.g., in *Cher.* 73, 114, 143. See Mott (1978).

though the words remain the same and in many respects share conceptualities. A cursory glance at two passages in 1 Timothy that demonstrate characteristic features of the author's view of εὐσέβεια, a term that is important in Greek, Jewish and Christian thought will make the point.[17]

Εὐσέβεια occurs three times in 1 Tim 3:14–4:10, which is an excursus from an itemization of qualifications and duties of various church functionaries (3:1–4:16). An *inclusio* is formed by the use of the divine epithet θεὸς ζῶν in 3:15 and 4:10. The church is the pillar and support of the truth, which is described as τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον, which is then set forth in a creedal statement of six strophes which recount the Christological drama from Christ's manifestation (ἐφανερώθη) in the flesh to his ascension (3:16). This is most likely a fuller statement of what is in mind in 2 Tim 1:9–10 and Titus 2:11.

There are practical implications to εὐσέβεια, which include such matters as filial responsibility (cf. 1 Tim 5:4, τὸν ἴδιον οἶκον εὐσεβεῖν). In 1 Tim 4:7, Timothy is told to train (γυμνάζω) himself in εὐσέβεια, for while training of the body is of little benefit, εὐσέβεια is of benefit in every way, since it holds promise for life now and that which is to come (3:8). The argument has an affinity with the philosophers' utterances about the value of physical exercise, which they too relativised.

Philosophers held that exercise should be short and simple, and not keep one from matters of the mind, which should be exercised day and night (Cicero, *Fin.* 2.64; Lucian, *Nigr.* 26; Seneca, *Ep.* 15.4). Both types of training are necessary (Isocrates, *Ad Nic.* 11; Ps. Isocrates, *Demon.* 9, 12; Musonius Rufus, *Frag.* 6). The noble man struggles to attain virtue throughout his entire life, which is a constant training aimed at progress toward virtue (Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 8.15), which promises to create happiness, calm and serenity, so progress toward virtue is progress toward each of these things (Epictetus, *Diatr.* 1.4.3), and such progress is made through reason and philosophy.

In 1 Tim 4, the benefit accruing from physical exercise is also relativised, but the goal is not virtue or happiness, but εὐσέβεια, nor is there an explicit reference to education, as in Tit 2:12.[18] The

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[17] For a discussion of εὐσέβεια in the PE, see Marshall (1999, 135–144); for a more wide-ranging treatment, see Foerster (1977), and for Epicurean as well as other philosophies, see Obbink (1996).

[18] Contrast 4 Maccabees, whose theme is that religious reason (εὐσεβὴς λογισμός)

author has used language from the philosophers and changed major features of their thinking. But it is not clear how his several pieces dealing with εὐσέβεια fit into a coherent theological whole. One might expect from 3:16 that εὐσέβεια should there be related to Christology, or from 4:1–5 to the doctrine of creation, but the connections are not made. We are left with a reference to the καλὴ διδασκαλία to which Timothy holds (4:6), which refers to matters of diet but probably also to his training in εὐσέβεια. And the entire discussion of the excursus has in some way to do with salvation, if we are to judge from the final epithet for God, with which it closes, ὅς ἐστιν σωτὴρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων (3:12).

The connection of εὐσέβεια with teaching also appears in the other cluster in 1 Timothy where it appears four times (6:3, 5, 6, 11), the first being of primary interest. Verses 3–5 form a sub-unit in a longer discussion on financial matters. The pericope accuses the false teachers of not heeding the sound words of the Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness (μὴ προσέρχεται ὑγιαίνουσιν λόγοις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ τῇ κατ᾽ εὐσέβειαν διδασκαλίᾳ). The καί is epexegetic, introducing an explanation of the sound teaching, that it is in accord with godliness.

The major problem is whether the genitive is subjective or objective, thus, whether it is Jesus who teaches the sound words, which are in accord with εὐσέβεια, or whether it is the teaching about him that constitutes the sound words and is contrary to heretical teaching. The latter is more likely, for the PE do not reflect any of Jesus' teachings, with the possible exception of 1 Tim 5:17 (cf. Matt. 10:10 pars.), and 1 Tim 3:16 also exhibits an interest in the earthly Jesus, there described as the content of the mystery of the church's εὐσέβεια. What interests the author there as well as here are the practical dimensions of εὐσέβεια. The heretics do not hold to the sound teaching that is in accord with godliness, know nothing, and are steeped in vice (vv. 3–4).

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is master of the emotions (1:1; cf. 6:31; 7:16; 16:1). Reason is the intellect (νοῦς) which, with correct judgment, chooses the life of wisdom, and wisdom is knowledge of things human and divine and their cause. This latter formulation was a well-known definition of philosophy (e.g., Aetius, *Placita* 1.2, p. 273, 11–13 Diels; Albinus, *Didask.* 1.1), but for 4 Maccabees, such wisdom is education (παιδεία) in the Law (1:15–17). Thus the reason that controls the emotions is that of the Jews' ancestral religion (ἡ πάτριος ἡμῶν εὐσέβεια, 9:29).

The second occurrence of εὐσέβεια in this cluster is in v. 5. Corrupt in mind and bereft of the truth, the heretics think εὐσέβεια is a profit-making affair. The verse provides a link with the following pericope, which begins with the ironic affirmation that εὐσέβεια is indeed of great profit if it is accompanied by self-sufficiency, which is the author's real interest. The topic takes up the next four verses (vv. 7–10a), which contain nothing specifically Christian; taken in isolation, they could as well have been written by a Stoic or a Cynic.[19] Even the progression from πορισμός to αὐτάρκεια, the favourite virtue of these philosophers, is a natural one in the discussions of how to secure one's livelihood (cf. Musonius Rufus, *Frag.* 11).

The moral commonplaces that crop up with monotonous regularity in discussions of self-sufficiency and avarice are trotted out in vv. 7–10a, but the author does not make clear how these one-liners are peculiarly religious, to say nothing of being Christian. We are simply left with the assertion that the practical, orthodox profession is of great profit, but only if it is accompanied by self-sufficiency. The author has lost interest in εὐσέβεια after his opaque assertion of v. 6, only mentioning it again in a list of virtues in v. 11.

At the risk of harsh overstatement and gross oversimplification, one has the impression that the author lays claim to a favourite Hellenistic moral term, εὐσέβεια, here and elsewhere in the PE, to describe a quality of Christian life in a manner that would make it intellectually appealing to a literate reader. He does give it his own nuances, only some of which have been noted above. The major thing for him is that εὐσέβεια is possible only if the sound teaching is strictly adhered to. According to Titus 2;11–12, it is God's saving grace that educates his people to live εὐσεβῶς in the present age.

Similarities to the philosophical traditions continue even in v. 14, where the human condition from which people are redeemed is described as ἀνομία. What the author understands by this is probably explained by 1 Tim 1:8–10, where the ἄνομοι are associated with a long list of vices, καὶ εἴ τι ἕτερον τῇ ὑγιαινούσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀντίκειται. The notion of purification is also part of that tradition. According to Plutarch, a person is purified by submitting to reproof and admonition (*Inim. util.* 87C). Philosophy exercises its salutary power as it purifies a person's reason (*Adul. amic.* 59D), clearing a foggy and dull mind (*Rect. rat. aud.* 42C).

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[19] For a general view of αὐτάρκεια, see Malherbe (1995, 818–821) and the literature cited.

2.3. *Similarities and Differences*

It is clear by now that the moral philosophers' view of the human condition, that it has been caused by a failure to live rationally, and is purified by philosophic teaching which saves people, provides a conceptual framework also found in the PE, including its view of salvation. The similarities are numerous, but the differences are vast. Recognition of these differences in Tit 2:11–14 will help us to appreciate the way in which the author has appropriated philosophic conceptions and Christianised them in the process.

The first thing that strikes one as different is that the initiative lies with God. The moral scheme of things is seen from this perspective. In Ps. Plutarch's listing of the relationships about which philosophy teaches, the relationship with the gods comes first, but in Titus, the issue is not learning about one's relationship to God, but rather that the *education itself* originates with God. Furthermore, the salvific education is described in terms of God's grace, a quality of God, which means that, strictly speaking, one cannot speak of human virtue that is attained by means of education. Nevertheless, the soteriology described in Tit 2:11–14 is at heart cognitive and ethical.

The Greek understanding of the education in view rested on the assumption that the human being can realise his true humanity only through education. This autonomous human ideal is changed in Titus into a theonomous ideal (Merkel 1991, 99). Here there is no concentration on the individual, innate human capacity or on character development, but on the divine plan of salvation which existed before creation (1 Tim 1:9–10). This plan attained a decisive moment in the first manifestation of Christ the Saviour, and will come to fulfilment in the final manifestation of his glory. Christian existence is bracketed by these two manifestations. Its ultimate goal is not, then, the attainment of some personal fulfilment, like the Greek notions of happiness or virtue, but what is awaited is their blessed hope, which is the epiphany of another divine quality, "the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ."

In this pericope, Christ is first called σωτήρ in v. 13, although there is an allusion to him in v. 11. Some scholars blanch at reading τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ as calling Christ God.[20] There is a tendency to maintain a distinction between God and Christ, and

[20] For a full discussion of the issues, see Marshall (1999, 276–282).

to transfer the soteriological functions to Christ, who remains in a subordinate role (Dibelius and Conzelmann 1972, 143; Merkel 1991, 99–100). A number of factors, however, suggest that the reference is to Christ (Stettler 1998, 256–260), among them the grammatical likelihood that the one article connects all that follows. Furthermore, when ἐπιφάνεια is used of a person in the PE, it describes the appearance of Christ (1 Tim 6:14; 2 Tim 1:10; 4:1, 8), even if only allusively in v. 11. Verse 14 states in what sense he is Saviour and deserves the epithet. It is in a functional sense that Christ can be called God, but to introduce the notion of subordination here misses the point, for he exemplifies in his own actions the pre-eminent activity of God, namely, saving people according to God's eternal purpose.

Christ's work as Saviour is described in v. 14 with the aid of traditions that are patently OT, Jewish and Christian in origin. There are terms like καθαρίζω and καλὰ ἔργα, which would be congenial to the philosophers, but the weight has shifted. The author uses a formula which speaks of the significance of Jesus' death (Rom 8:30; Gal 1:4; 2:20; Eph 5:2, 25; cf. 1 Tim 2:6). The formula is given a further traditional cast by OT allusions to describe Christ's redeeming act (Ps 129:8 LXX) and his purification of a people of his own (Ezek 37:23 LXX; Exod 19:5 LXX). The corporate image of the people differs from the Greek focus on the individual, which is characteristic of the material to which reference was made above, and its peculiar nature is intoned: the redeemed people are Christ's, and they are peculiarly his own, περιούσιος, a term derived from Exod 19:5 LXX, whose meaning would not have been intelligible to the average Greek reader. The OT idea that God's people have special responsibilities finds expression in the phrase that they are to be a people ζηλωτὴς καλῶν ἔργων, which is a Greek expression (Dibelius and Conzelmann 1972, 143; Brox 1989, 301).

What, then, can be said about the soteriological passage, Tit 2:1–14? Certainly it is not just a collection of old material, with no originality but only appropriated to give the letter a semblance of traditional teaching. It is, rather, part of the fabric of the context in which it is situated and of the PE as a whole. Its core is the saving action of God and Christ through education for the moral life, having rejected a life caught in vice because of ignorance. Christ is so fully engaged in this salvific activity that he can himself be called God.

3. The Saviour's Kindness and Love for Humanity, Titus 3:3–7

3.1. *Form and Content of the Pericope*

The discussion of this second soteriological passage will be briefer than that of 2:11–14, for in many ways it is similar to it as to content and function. It is, however, even more social in interest. It too is one long sentence, largely constructed out of traditional material:

3 Ἦμεν γάρ ποτε καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀνόητοι, ἀπειθεῖς, πλανώμενοι,
δουλεύοντες ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ ἡδοναῖς ποικίλαῖς,
ἐν κακίᾳ καὶ φθόνῳ διάγοντες,
στυγητοί, μισοῦντες ἀλλήλους
4 ὅτε δὲ ἡ χρηστότης καὶ ἡ φιλανθρωπία ἐπεφάνη
τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ,
5 οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων τῶν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ἃ
ἐποιήσαμεν ἡμεῖς,
ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος ἔσωσεν ἡμᾶς
διὰ λούτρου παλιγγενεσίας
καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως πνεύματος
ἁγίου, οὗ ἐξέχεεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς
6 πλουσίως διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν,
7 ἵνα δικαιωθέντες τῇ ἐκείνου τῇ χάριτι κληρονόμοι
γενηθῶμεν κατ' ἐλπίδα ζωῆς αἰωνίου.

The passage is not derived entirely from Paul, and what does have a Pauline origin is not always used in a strictly Pauline sense. Nevertheless, read superficially, it might look like "an epitome of Pauline theology" (Guthrie 1986, 216), as it does to one scholar, or, as to another, "a pregnant expression of the gospel which articulates the inherent cooperation of the trinity in the work of salvation, wherein the role of the Holy Spirit is apparently underscored" (Lau 1996, 161).

Such views of the passage as a theological cameo, tend to neglect its context and therefore its function, as do those who consider it a bit of liturgical tradition (Läger 1996, 101–101, with some hesitation).

The passage is an integral part of the last exhortation in PE, which extends from 3:1–11, and provides the theological basis for that exhortation. In this, it is like 2:11–14. It is further like that passage in that it begins with a statement about God the Saviour and concludes with one about Christ the Saviour. The significance of the passage

will become evident when it is seen within its immediate context, which must be understood in light of the PE as a whole.

The structure of 3:1–7 is quite similar to that of 2:1–14. Each passage begins with paraenesis (2:1–10; 3:1–2), for which the soteriological passage then provides the theological ground (2:11–14; 3:3–7), in each case introduced by γάρ. Chapter 3 begins (vv. 1–2) with a paraenetic reminder, Ὑπομίμνησκε αὐτούς, followed by a series of commands which are strung together without any connectives, and with no reason given in vv. 1–2 for what is commanded.[21] It is in the nature of paraenesis that its precepts are self-evidently right and beneficial, as these are claimed to be in v. 8, ταῦτά ἐστιν καλὰ καὶ ὠφέλιμα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, the antecedent of ταῦτα being the precepts and their justification given in vv. 1–7.

As to the content of the precepts, nothing surprises, yet some things are noteworthy.

First, the precepts have more to do with Christians' relations to the larger society than with their personal morality in intracommunal relations, as is the case in 2:1–10.

Second, responsibility to civil authorities is specified. In pagan lists, these officials would have been mentioned toward the top, as they are in 1 Pet. 2:13.[22] We might therefore have expected them to be mentioned in 2:2, but by mentioning them separately, the author draws attention to them as leaders of the larger society in which the church lives. It is to be noted that they are mentioned at the beginning of a long sentence that ends with πρὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους. The quiet, irenic life of Christians is associated with obedience to civil authority. In 1 Tim 2:1–6, the responsibility towards civil rulers is prayer on behalf of all people, kings and all in positions of authority, so that a quiet life might be possible and God the Saviour's desire that all people be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth be fulfilled. The theme works differently in the two passages, but they have in common that God's and Christ's salvific purpose, which encompasses all human beings, requires behaviour that is consistent with that purpose.

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[21] For paraenetic reminder, see Seneca, *Epp.* 94.21, 26; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 17.2; Isocrates, *Nic.* 12; Lucian, *Nigr.* 7; for paraenetic style in general, see Malherbe (2000, 81–86), and Malherbe, "Paraenesis in the Epistle to Titus".

[22] See the quotation from Ps. Plutarch, *Lib. ed.* 7 D–F above.

Finally, it is to be observed that the irenic behaviour of these Christians is in direct contrast to that of the heretics, but in their demeanour they are like the orthodox preachers. We shall return to this contrast.

3.2. *The Theological Basis for the Paraenesis*

The theological basis for the paraenesis is given in the form of a contrast between the readers' lost pre-Christian condition and their saved state, brought about by God. The pattern of "once it was so but now it should be or is thus," a soteriological contrast pattern (thus Dahl 1976, 33–34), is used elsewhere in the NT (Rom 6:17–19; Eph 2:11–22; 5:8; Col 1:21–22; 1 Pet 2:10). This temporal scheme marking a decisive change in existence was well established in moral literature (Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.22.10, 13, 20; 4.4.6; Diogenes Laertius 6.56; see Tachau 1972, 74–84). The pattern corresponds to the way in which vices and virtues were used in protrepsis, vices listed first, from which the listener is urged to flee, and virtues second, which the hearer is to pursue (see, for example, Maximus of Tyre, *Or.* 36.4). A short example illustrates the form (Ps. Crates, *Ep.* 15, translation by R. F. Hock in Malherbe 1977, 65):

> Shun (φεύγετε) not only the worst of evils, injustice and self-indulgence, but also their causes, pleasures. For you will concentrate on these alone, both present and future, and on nothing else. And pursue (διώκετε) not only the best of goods, self-control and perseverance, but also their causes, toils, and do not shun (φεύγετε) them on account of their harshness. For would you not exchange inferior things for something great? As you would receive gold in exchange for copper, so you would receive virtue in exchange for toils.

After conversion, the pattern φεύγετε διώκω is then used in paraenesis (see, e.g., 1 Tim 6:1; 2 Tim 2:22).

The temporal scheme (ποτε ὅτε) is used in Titus 3:3–7 to provide the theological basis for the paraenesis of vv. 1–2. The pre-conversion state is described in the harshest terms, beginning with ἀνόητοι, of which the other vices, according to the view of the philosophers we have observed earlier, are consequences of their lack of reason. The misanthropy revealed in this state is reminiscent of descriptions of a very pessimistic view of the human condition (e.g., Ps. Diogenes, *Ep.* 28). With the emphatic ἡμεῖς in v. 3, the author includes himself

with those who once shared in this condition. In 1 Tim 1:12–16, in presenting himself as an example of those who would believe, "Paul" mentions his own blasphemy, persecutions and ignorance, from which he had been saved by the mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus, who had come into the world to save sinners. These elements are also present in this passage.

What brought about the change in the author's readers, with whom he identifies, was the epiphany of God the Saviour's kindness and love for humanity (v. 4). We thus again have to do with qualities of the Lord, in this case, those of the sort the writer wants Titus to cultivate in his hearers. The term that has drawn most attention is φιλανθρωπία, and it is usually pointed out that it originally described a virtue of the gods, and then of rulers. By the time of the Roman Empire, it also described people whose philanthropy was thought of as an imitation of the divine's goodness.[23] Such an interpretation would fit this context, where the writer wants the reader to imitate God's qualities.

We have seen that the PE are shot through with philosophical traditions, as indeed this passage is. Now, philosophers of the better sort spoke in order to benefit people and they personally exemplified the virtuous life.[24] Their motivation was sometimes identified as goodwill, and sometimes as φιλανθρωπία. Epictetus, Paul's contemporary, illustrates how a sense of divine commission could go hand in hand with a philanthropic demeanour (Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.24.64). Speaking of Diogenes, of whom he had a startlingly different view from that of the misanthrope who putatively wrote the pseudepigraphic letter referred to above, he says:

> Come, was there anybody Diogenes did not love, a man who was so gentle and loving of humanity (ἥμερος . . . καὶ φιλάνθρωπος) that he gladly took upon himself all trouble and hardships for the sake of the common good? As became a Servant of Zeus, caring for people indeed, but at the same time subject to God.

It has been observed that in 2:11 the author attributes the educational function generally attributed to philosophers to the saving grace of God the Saviour. He does something similar here. The noble qualities of the ideal reformer of human beings, the philosopher, are the-

[23] Spicq (1991, 1582–1587).
[24] See Seneca, *Epp.* 25.6; 52.8; 94.40–41; Fiore (1986); Malherbe (1986, 135–138).

ologized. They are presented as the divine qualities of God the Saviour, who brought them to conversion. These noble qualities are combined with the notion of epiphany, which connotes divine initiative and an intention to benefit human beings.

The major difference in purpose between this passage and 2:11–12 is that, where in the latter the purpose of the epiphany is continuing training in moral conduct, here it is assumed that the epiphany of the kindness and love of humanity of the Saviour God has already brought about a change in the human condition, the consequences of which are now to be expressed in the kind of life described in vv. 1–2. Verses 5–7 expatiate on that salvation, in which Christ plays a decisive role, as an expression of God's kindness and love of humanity.

The author is enough of a Paulinist to deny that human merit is a condition of salvation (v. 5; cf. 2 Tim 1:9), and to use the passive in v. 7, δικαιωθέντες τῇ ἐκείνου χάριτι. This sounds like Paul, but is not precisely Paul. Paul speaks of the Law, and faith as the means of salvation (Rom 3:20, 27–28; Gal 2:16), neither of which is present here. Furthermore, for Paul faith is reckoned as δικαιοσύνη (Rom 4:1–4), whereas in the PE δικαιοσύνη is something to be pursued (διώκε[τε]/δικαιοσύνην; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22), for which one will receive a crown of victory on the Day of Judgment (2 Tim 4:8). It is something one is trained (παιδεύω, παιδεία) for by the saving grace of God (Titus 2:11–12) or by Scripture (2 Tim 3:16).

It is not clear how δικαιοσύνη is to be understood in v. 5, but perhaps the philosophical tradition may be of assistance. Among the cardinal virtues, δικαιοσύνη is the one that keeps things in balance and within boundaries, and is associated with the concept of benefit (ὠφέλεια). Its presence in one's soul makes one able to benefit, not only others, but oneself, for justice is what keeps one's life in equilibrium. Such a person is able, Dio Chrysostom says, to care for people, "not by arousing strife or greed or contentions and jealousies and base desires for gain, but reminding [them] of sobriety and δικαιοσύνη and harmony . . ." (*Or.* 77/78.39).

When the author says in v. 5 that God had saved them, not because of deeds performed in a state of righteousness (ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ), he is stating the obvious, for he had just in v. 3 described behaviour that was anything but that of a just or righteous person. The reason for mentioning righteousness is to be found in the fact that it is the first part of an antithesis which has the rhetorical function

of highlighting the second part.[25] Here, in the second member of the antithesis, it is God's mercy in saving them that he stresses. That also is the quality Christ is said to have demonstrated when he saved Paul (1 Tim 1:13, 15).

A major difference between this formulation of salvation by God and that in 2:11–14, is that here the means by which God saved is a single, past event, unlike the continuing educative process conceived of by the philosophers, or the disciplined striving for good that, according to the author, continues after conversion. The means by which people are saved is a washing, that is, baptism, viewed here under two aspects, that of regeneration or rebirth, and renewal. The emphasis is thus on a complete transformation that is brought about in baptism. This radical change was brought about by virtue of God's mercy when his kindness and love for humanity appeared. The effective power in this transforming event is the Holy Spirit, whom God richly poured out on those being baptized.

The initiative resides with God, but Christ is the agent through whom God pours out the Spirit in baptism, and he too is called Saviour, evidently by virtue of his role in salvation as here conceived (v. 6). Justification here (v. 7) is not to be understood in the Pauline sense of being brought into a right relationship with God, but in a moral sense, a just life by virtue of Christ's grace. This fits the understanding of salvation as a moral conversion from the condition described in v. 3, and is in keeping with the philosophic understanding of conversion. But conversion here differs radically from that of the philosophers in that, at the very core of this understanding of salvation are God's initiative and aid, the role of the Spirit in the transformation that occurs in baptism, and Christ, as God's agent, in rendering converts just by grace.

3.3. *The Reason for Describing Salvation in This Manner*

The reasons for constructing this soteriological passage in the way it has been done become clear from what immediately follows (vv. 8–11). The author expresses himself emphatically, wanting Titus to insist on the things he has just said.[26] It is striking how many psy-

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[25] For antithesis, see Malherbe (2000, index, s.v. antithesis).

[26] He writes emphatically in all three letters. For example, in 1 Tim 5:21 he invokes the presence of God, Christ and the elect angels as he delivers a charge; cf. other ways of expressing emphasis: 1 Tim 2:8; 5:14; Tit 2:15; cf. 4:11–12.

chagogical terms, such as appealing, encouraging, comforting, confirming, establishing, beseeching, edifying, are missing from the PE.[27] There are, however, a few occasions when rhetorical devices common in moral exhortation are used (e.g., 1 Tim 4:12; Tit 2:7), he is aware of the need to adapt one's advice to particular persons (e.g., 1 Tim 5:17), and Timothy and Titus are to exemplify what they taught (1 Tim 4:12; Titus 2:7) and to remind their hearers of what they already know (2 Tim 2:14; Titus 3:1), but even a reminder is made with harsh language (e.g., 2 Tim 2:11–14). Such speech is especially appropriate in addressing troublemakers (1 Tim 5:20; Tit 1:13). But the preachers' speech is not to be only severe, for a kindly, gentle approach may be more successful in leading people to a knowledge of the truth (2 Tim 2:24–26).

In the PE, there is no great concern for adaptable exhortation, as described by the philosophers, which takes into consideration the condition and circumstances of the hearers (e.g., Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 77/78.38–39).[28] There is no room for private instruction; everything is to be in the open, and factious people are to be avoided (Tit 3:10–11).

In Titus 3:8, however, the author is careful to claim that what he wants Titus to say is noble and beneficial. That is standard fare among philosophers of the better class. So Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 34.4, claims, "I am here because there is nothing which I myself require of you, while on the contrary I have been much concerned to be of benefit to you." The way he benefits them is to teach the philosophical themes that have to do with conduct, which are beneficial and not new. People know the difference between good and evil. Dio again: "I consider it most beneficial to remind people of this without ceasing, and to appeal to their reason to give heed and in their acts to observe what is right and proper" (*Or.* 17.2). That is also what Paul wants Titus to do: Titus is to remind the Cretans (3:1) of the good works taught, which are also considered good by moral philosophers, and are stipulated in vv. 1–2, for they are excellent and beneficial. For our author, of course, it is the Christian tradition that provides guidance and is beneficial (cf. 2 Tim 3:14–17).

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[27] Contrast 1 Thess, on which, see the discussion in Malherbe (2000, index, s.v. "lexicon of exhortation").

[28] See 2 Tim 4:1–5, and Malherbe (1989, 137–145); 1 Thess 5:12–17, on which, see Malherbe (2000).

In contrast to Titus's demanding, socially responsible teaching, which is excellent and beneficial, is the bellicose ranting of those who bedevil the church. The few words in v. 9 recall their depiction throughout the PE as harsh, bellicose, misanthropic, proud, arrogant, abusive, slanderous, fierce, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with deceit (e.g., 1 Tim 6:3–5). The type of speaker described here was well known at the time when the PE were written (see, e.g., Plutarch, *Virt. prof.* 80 BC; Ps. Diogenes, *Ep.* 29.4–5). The author has applied the descriptions of these vituperative speakers to the unorthodox teachers, who, finally, are called ἀνωφελεῖς καὶ μάταιοι (v. 9).

The function of the soteriological passage is to be seen in this context. Titus must teach those under his influence to be socially responsible and gentle to all people. They have not always been thus, but had been steeped in personal and social vices until the kindness and love for humans of God the Saviour appeared and saved them. The qualities of the genuine philosophers are ascribed to God, in a manner analogous to 2:11–12. But here there is no emphasis on cognition or education as in the former passage. The divine qualities are those the believers should have, and that will set them apart from the unorthodox teachers. Soteriology in this passage serves first and foremost a moral and social function, with a special interest in the church's relations with the larger society.

4. Conclusion

Examination of only two passages cannot justify broad declarations about the soteriology of the PE. But the two passages that we have studied permit some conclusions.

First is that the soteriology of the letters is related to the human condition from which people are saved. That condition reflects a pessimistic view of human beings who have not come to a knowledge of the truth and do not live according to the sound teaching of the church. Salvation is therefore inextricably related to a process of learning, which is made possible because God's saving grace appeared in order to educate people how to live.

Second is that the consequence of salvation is pre-eminently social ethics. The PE are more concerned with the corporate dimension of the church than with individuals in it. A major interest of the letters is with social institutions, including the church itself, and the salvation

experienced by the church is to determine its relationship to the larger society.

Third is that salvation is not simply brought about by actions of God and Christ. Indeed, God takes initiative to save, and traditional formulas are used to describe Christ's work in salvation. But what is most striking, is that salvation is affected by the appearance in history of certain qualities of God, which change the condition of those who come to a knowledge of the truth. That appearance was the manifestation of the earthly Jesus; another appearance, of his eschatological glory, determines the goal of those who have been saved. They do not aim at attaining virtue or happiness, but live in hope as they wait for that appearance (2:13), in order to become heirs of eternal life in accordance with that hope.

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PART THREE

PERSPECTIVES ON SALVATION FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, HEBREWS, AND REVELATION

CHAPTER ONE

GOD'S PURPOSES AND CHRIST'S SAVING WORK ACCORDING TO HEBREWS

Craig R. Koester
Luther Seminary/
Associate University of Pretoria

1. Introduction

Hebrews centres on the question of the future of the people of God. It was written for Christian readers who had received the gospel message at some point in the past, and whose initial faith experience seems to have been marked by a vivid sense of God's power (Heb 2:3–4; 6:1–4). Their newfound belief was regarded as genuine enlightenment, yet it separated them from others in their community and led to harassment from some who did not share their convictions. Christians were verbally abused, some were imprisoned, and others lost property, yet members of the congregation showed strong support for each other in the face of these challenges (10:32–34). By the time Hebrews was written the more intense form of opposition seems to have given way to a lower level of tension with the wider non-Christian society. Nevertheless, at least some members of the Christian community seemed discouraged, and some were neglecting to meet together (5:11; 6:12; 10:25).[1] In such dispiriting circumstances the question of what the future held was pressing.

The author writes these Christians a sermon or "word of exhortation" designed to bolster their commitments to Christ and to each other (3:6; 10:23–24; 13:22). Using a rich collection of images, the

[1] Traditionally Hebrews was thought to address readers who were leaving Christianity to return to Judaism, and the author therefore shows the superiority of Christ to Jewish institutions (Bruce 1990, 382; Lane 1991, 545–46; Lindars 1991, 4–15). Others find this unlikely and focus instead on the broader problems of discouragement, which may have arisen from various causes (Käsemann 1984, 17–22; Attridge 1989, 13; Weiss 1991, 72–74). On faith and social dislocation see Koester (2001, 64–72) and deSilva (2000, 7–20).

author affirms that God will be true to his promises of salvation, despite the community's seemingly unpromising situation. God's faithfulness is the basis for human faith. The introduction to Hebrews depicts Christ in glory and speaks of the faithful "inheriting" salvation in the world to come, emphasizing that salvation is God's gift (1:1–2:4). Its first main series of arguments holds out the promise of entering God's Sabbath rest, using imagery from Israel's exodus and journey to the promised land (2:10–5:10). The second series of arguments traces a movement through the curtain of the sanctuary and into the holy of holies, drawing on images of priesthood, sacrifice, and covenant (7:1–10:25). The third series of arguments culminates in the celestial city of God, where all the redeemed assemble for a festal gathering.[2]

Sin and death are barriers that must be overcome for people to enter abiding life with God. Hebrews associates sin with unbelief or faithlessness as well as with wrongful actions, and refers to it as the source of impurity and defilement (3:12–19; 12:15–17; 13:4). For people to draw near to God the barrier created by sin must be removed through purification, sanctification, and atonement. These actions, which Hebrews understands to be accomplished through Christ's death and exaltation, bring people into right relationship with God in the present and give them confidence that the future Day of the Lord will bring them blessing rather than condemnation. Death is another barrier to everlasting life with God. It is overcome in a provisional way through Christ's resurrection, which assures the faithful that death's power is not supreme, and it is overcome in a final way through the believer's own resurrection from the dead (2:14–15; 6:2; 11:19, 35). Finally, Christian life in the world may entail social dislocation and conflict. The promise of life in God's heavenly city accents the social dimension of salvation, for in it readers glimpse the future of a redeemed community of people (12:22–24).

Hebrews most often uses the terms "save" (σώζω) and "salvation" (σωτηρία) for the final deliverance that will take place in the future, when God's designs are completed at the time of Christ's return. Salvation is the share in the world to come that the faithful hope to inherit (1:14; 2:5; 6:10), and it means deliverance from divine judgment and everlasting glory in the presence of God (2:3, 10; 5:9;

[2] Many modern studies and commentaries on Hebrews follow a five part outline like that of Vanhoye (1976). Cf. Attridge (1989); Lane (1991); Ellingworth (1993). On the outline used here see Koester (2001, 83–86).

7:25). Thus the author can say that "Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (9:28). The readers of Hebrews find themselves looking back to the definitive self-sacrifice for sin that Christ has already made and looking forward to his coming again, when God's saving purposes will be brought to their culmination (Käsemann 1984, 26–31; Grässer 1990, 96; Weiss 1991, 170).

2. Inheriting Salvation

Hebrews begins with vivid portrayal of Christ in glory, which gives readers a glimpse of the outcome of God's purposes (1:1–2:4). After declaring that God spoke in many and various ways through Israel's prophets of old, the author announces that God has now spoken by a Son, whom God appointed heir of all things. Reflecting the glory of God and bearing the imprint of God's being, the Son is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. The scriptural quotations that follow show that Christ's present glory results from the fulfilment of God's promises. In the Scriptures God said, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you" (Ps 2:7), and "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son" (2 Sam 7:14). It is through Christ's death and exaltation that these words of God are kept.[3]

Christ's exaltation to heaven glory anticipates what salvation will mean for his followers. Christ is God's 'Son' in a singular sense (υἱός, 1:2), yet Hebrews recognizes that Christ's followers can be called God's "sons" and daughters of God in an extended sense (υἱοί, 2:10). If Christ has become "heir" of all things and "inherited" a name superior to that of the angels (1:2, 4), his followers are those who are to "inherit" salvation (1:14); and in this context salvation means receiving a share in "the world to come" that the author has disclosed through his depiction of the exalted Christ (2:5). If the Son bears the radiance of God's glory (1:3), his followers are among the many sons and daughters whom God is bringing to glory through Christ's own death and exaltation (2:10). The author will insist that since

[3] The comment about the Son's agency in creation in 1:2 assumes his pre-existence, but the emphasis in the passage is on his exaltation (Vanhoye 1969, 139–42; Weiss 1991, 161; Schenck 2001).

God brought Christ through suffering to heavenly glory, the readers can be confident that God will also bring Christ's followers through suffering to the glory that has been promised to them.

Language of inheritance had a broad currency in the ancient world. Inheritance is based on a person's promise to give something to one's heirs, and expressions like "I give", "I leave", and "I bequeath" were regularly used in wills (Hunt and Edgar 1932, 236–61). Later the readers will be identified as the heirs of the promises that God made to Abraham, which included blessings, belonging to a great people, and receiving a place to live (6:13–17; 11:8). All of these are among the "things that belong to salvation" (6:9). The author assumes that such blessings will be everlasting rather than transient, so that he can speak of "eternal salvation" as "eternal inheritance" and receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken (5:9; 9:15; 12:28).

In common practice giving an inheritance occurs in two stages. First, the heirs are given the promise that they will receive something in the future. Second, the heirs later come into full possession of their inheritance, usually after the testator's death (9:16–17). The language suits the situation of those addressed by Hebrews, for they have received the promise of salvation from God, but have not yet received their inheritance in its entirety (Käsemann 1984, 32–37). Because the promises of God have not been fully realized in the readers' experience, the author warns about the danger of neglecting and drifting away from the message of salvation (2:3). Then, by quoting and commenting on Ps 8:4–6, the author shifts the focus from the heavenly glory of Christ to address the inglorious reality of life in the world (Heb 2:5–9).

The Psalm is valuable for the author's argument because it can be read on two levels: first as a statement about "man" or humankind, and second as a statement about the man Jesus (Hurst 1987; Dunn 1989, 110; Grässer 1990, 117–20; cf. Ellingworth 1993, 150–52). When read in its original literary context, the Psalm declares that God created human beings ("man" and "son of man") for glory and honour, placing all things in subjection under their feet. The problem is that the words of the Psalm do not correspond to the situation of Christ's followers. God may have created people for glory, honour, and dominion, but those addressed by Hebrews find God's designs contradicted by experience. Past outbursts of harassment, loss of property, and imprisonment at the hands of non-Christians, followed an ongoing lower level of social tension (10:32–34; 13:13), seem to

have produced despondency among some readers, and this in turn has led to a loss of cohesion within the community (5:11; 10:25; 12:12). Therefore, after quoting the Psalm, the author acknowledges that the readers do not "see" this glory in their own experience; but he adds that in the gospel message the readers do "see" that Jesus, who by the grace of God suffered death for everyone, is now crowned with glory and honour (2:8b–9). Jesus' suffering does not negate God's saving purposes but is integral to the way God carries them out. Consideration of the three main sections of Hebrews will show how the author perceives God's purposes being accomplished.

3. Deliverance from Slavery and Entry into God's Rest

The first main series of arguments considers how Jesus' suffering and glorification both anticipate and bring about the salvation of others (2:10–5:10). The section is framed by references to Jesus as "the pioneer of salvation" and "the source of eternal salvation", and to his being made complete through suffering (2:10; 5:8–10). The author portrays Jesus both as heroic liberator and as merciful high priest, and these two dimensions of Christ's saving work reflect the complexity of the human situation in which God's purposes are carried out. On the one hand, the presentation of Christ as liberator assumes that human beings are oppressed by evil powers from which they need deliverance. People are enslaved by the fear of death, which is a weapon wielded by the devil, and they need to be liberated by divine action (2:14–16). On the other hand, the presentation of Christ as high priest assumes that people are sinners, whose own unbelief and transgressions separate them from God. From this perspective they need sanctification and atonement in order to have their relationships with God restored (2:11, 17–18). Where the focus on heroic deliverance accents the way that powers beyond human control hold people captive, the focus on sanctification and atonement gives greater weight to human accountability for sin. Since people are both victims of evil powers and perpetrators of sin, the author develops a complex understanding of salvation that takes both dimensions into account.[4]

[4] Interpreters often take priesthood and atonement to be the overriding theme

Portraying Christ as heroic liberator, the author identifies him as "the pioneer of salvation" (2:10). The evocative term "pioneer" (ἀρχηγός) introduces the account of Christ's battle with Satan in 2:14–15. Formed from roots meaning "first" (ἀρχή) and "lead" (ἄγω), the word could identify the leader of a group of people (Num 10:4 LXX) and one who led troops into battle (Judg 11:6 LXX). As an ἀρχηγός or pioneer, Jesus will engage in battle with the devil, making a way through suffering and death and into life—a way that others will follow.

Jesus' course of action first involves his incarnation, for by it he identifies with people whom God has created (Weiss 1991, 216). Hebrews says that God's singular Son and his many other sons and daughters are all "of one" (ἐξ ἑνός), which means that all owe their existence to God (Heb 2:11).[5] The author does not overlook the many differences between Christ and those he came to save—for example the Son was the one through whom God created the world, which could not be said of human beings (1:2)—but he does affirm that Christ and human beings are "of one" because in their different ways they exist because of God. Accordingly, the Son of God can speak of those whom God has created as his brothers and sisters (2:11). He can share the human condition of flesh and blood because the material world is not inherently alien or evil but is God's creation.

The second step in Christ's work is death, and the third is his resurrection and exaltation to God's right hand. Christ shared in human flesh and blood so that "through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death" (2:14–15). Here Christ's death is understood to be a means of engaging the devil, who wields the power of death. All people are subject to death and are enslaved by their fear of it, but Jesus encountered death as an assailant rather than a victim. He intruded into death's domain in order to overcome it. By dying and being raised, Jesus showed that death's power is not absolute, but is subject to the greater power of

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of Hebrews (Grässer 1990, 25; Vanhoye 1976, 84–85; Lindars 1991, 14–15), but the soteriology of Hebrews actually emerges through the interplay of various images. On a similar interplay in John's Gospel see Koester (2003, 207–46) and in theological writing see Gunton (1989).

[5] Some interpreters take "of one" to mean "of one family" (NIV, cf. NJB, REB; Ellingworth 1993, 165; Dunnill 1992, 209–13). Others understand that it refers to God as the common origin for all (NRSV; Attridge 1989, 89; Laub 1980, 77).

God. Although the author speaks of Christ destroying the one who has the power of death, he recognizes that Jesus' followers do face the prospect of dying (9:27) and that evil will continue to threaten them (3:12). The implication is that the destruction of death and the devil has begun but is not yet complete. Death is real but it is not final; therefore the faithful need not fear it.

Hebrews' references to human fear of death and heroic portrayal of Christ both adapt and alter Greco-Roman patterns. The idea that the fear of death made one a slave was common in Greek and Latin writers, but the usual way they envisioned overcoming this fear was by treating death as an escape from suffering: "Are you a slave and afraid of death, which might set you free from suffering?" (Euripides, *Orest.* 1522; cf. Plutarch, *Mor.* 34B; Cicero, *Att.* 9.2a). Hebrews agrees that fear of death is slavery, but insists that death is an instrument of evil and is therefore to be defeated, not welcomed. Christ overcame death through his own resurrection and thereby offers his followers the confidence that they too will overcome it by being raised from the dead. This more vigorous notion of defeating death bears some resemblance to Greco-Roman tales of Heracles, who was said to have descended to the netherworld, where he overcame the dark-robed lord of the dead. Heracles' valour meant that he was now deified and that people could turn to him in time of difficulty (Homer, *Iliad* 5.394–400; Euripides, *Alc.* 76, 843–44; Seneca, *Herc. Fur.* 889–90; Aune 1990). Hebrews uses similar imagery to convey the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection without reducing Jesus to yet another deified hero. Jesus is the embodiment of the singular Son through whom God created the world, and his death and exaltation are the definitive means through which God addresses the world "in these last days" (Heb 1:2–3).

The principal source of the deliverance imagery in Hebrews is the story of Israel's liberation from bondage in Egypt (Andriessen 1976, 304–13). The agent of deliverance at the time of the exodus was Moses, who is compared to Christ in 3:1–6. Moses began his life in the Egyptian royal house (Exod 2:10; Heb 11:24–26), yet like Jesus he was not ashamed to consider enslaved people his brothers and sisters (Exod 2:11; 4:18; Heb 11:24–26). Like Jesus, Moses declared God's name to others and trusted God (Exod 3:13–15; 14:13–14; Heb 2:12–13). When Moses led the descendants of Abraham out of slavery, pharaoh's army was destroyed and the people were delivered; and when Jesus died and rose, he destroyed the devil's ability

to wield death as a weapon, thereby delivering the descendants of Abraham from fear of death (Exod 14:21–31; Heb 2:14–16).

The story of the wilderness generation enabled Hebrews to distinguish initial deliverance from final salvation in a way that helped make sense of the readers' own experience. Raising Jesus from the dead was a genuine act of divine deliverance for the readers, just as parting the water of the sea had been for ancient Israel; and if the Christian community now found itself in challenging situations, the same was true for those who passed through the sea. The readers of Hebrews faced hostility from non-Christians because acceptance of the gospel set them apart from those who did not share their faith, just as Moses' generation faced a journey through a hostile wilderness because they had been freed from Egypt. The true challenge, therefore, was to persevere in the journey of faith, confident that the God who brought deliverance through Jesus Christ would bring his saving purposes to completion in the future (Käsemann 1984; Arowele 1990; Enns 1993).

Divine judgment remained an ominous prospect for the readers of Hebrews, just as it did for the wilderness generation. God's promises of salvation provided incentive to remain faithful, even as sin and unbelief threatened to draw them away from God. Citing a portion of Ps 95, the author of Hebrews recalls that the generation that was delivered from slavery in Egypt failed to enter the Promised Land. The reason was not that God failed them, but that they refused to trust God's promise. The form that divine judgment took was that God allowed them to bear the consequences of unbelief. Although God had promised to bring them to the Promised Land, they persistently refused to trust his promise, so that God allowed them to die in the wilderness (Num 14:1–35; Heb 3:7–19). The question facing the readers of Hebrews was whether they would repeat the wilderness generation's pattern of unbelief, or whether whey would trust God's promises in the hope of seeing their full and final realization (Grässer 1990, 203).

Hebrews gives readers incentive to persevere by repeating that the promise of entering God's rest remains open (4:1). Although Canaan was described as a place of rest (Exod 33:14; Deut 12:10; 25:19; Josh 1:13, 15), the author argues that God's promise of rest pointed to something that transcended Israel's entry into the land under Joshua's leadership (Heb 4:8; Isaacs 1992, 78–88; Backhaus 2001). In Ps 95:11, God referred to people entering "my rest", and Hebrews

envisions what God's own rest entails by thinking of how God rested on the seventh or Sabbath day after completing the work of creation (Gen 2:2; Heb 4:4, 10). Hebrews posits a symmetry in the activity of God. If God's work culminated in a Sabbath rest at the dawn of time, Hebrews assumes that God's work will culminate in a Sabbath rest at the end of time.

The people of God look forward to receiving the glory and honour for which God created them (Heb 2:5–9), and an eternal Sabbath rest is a fitting way to envision the realization of this promise because the Sabbath was understood to be a way in which God honoured Israel (*Jub* 50:10). To join in the eternal Sabbath is to cease from one's labours as God did from his (Heb 4:10). God's rest cannot be fully comprehended in human terms, but a glimpse is given in Jesus, in whom readers can "see" the fulfilment of God's promises (2:9). Jesus moved through suffering and is now seated at God's right hand, having opened the way for others to find repose under his righteous rule (1:3, 13). Hope of entering eternal Sabbath rest means that the readers, like the Son, will experience a life that transcends the mortality of the present and share in the joy of life under Christ's everlasting reign (1:9–12).[6]

4. Priestly Sacrifice and Entry into the Sanctuary

The central section of Hebrews uses images from Israel's sacral tradition to convey the work of Christ (7:1–10:25). The consummation of God's saving purposes is depicted as entry into the holy of holies, the most sacred part of Israel's sanctuaries, where God was understood to be especially present. Introducing this section, the author urges readers to "seize the hope that is set before us," a hope that "enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (6:18–20). The references to Christ's priesthood that were introduced earlier (2:17–18; 4:14–5:10), are now developed as the author explores the sacrificial implications of Christ's death and exaltation, then beckons readers to approach the God in

[6] "Rest" is sometimes understood primarily in spatial terms, as a place of rest (Käsemann 1984, 33), but "rest" also encompasses the condition or quality of divine rest (Attridge 1989, 126–28; Isaacs 1992, 82).

the sanctuary with confidence (10:19–25). Where the previous portrayal of Christ as a liberator assumed that people were enslaved by tyrannical powers, the priestly portrayal presupposes that human beings are sinners, whose sin must be dealt with before they can relate rightly to God.

The categories and images for Hebrews' presentation of the priestly work of Christ are derived from the OT. Israel's earthly sanctuary was a "shadow" of the true one in heaven (8:5) and the Law's statutes concerning sacrifice were a "shadow" of the good things that have been accomplished in Christ (10:1). According to Hebrews, the Scriptures foreshadow what Christ accomplishes. Since the author understands the same God to have spoken through the prophets and through a Son (Heb 1:1–2), he understands Christ and the Scriptures in relation to each other. On the one hand, what God disclosed through the prophets is prior to Christ in time, so that the scriptural words create the context in which the meaning of Christ's work can be discerned. The author does not begin with a fully developed view of Christ that he then relates to the OT, but discerns the significance of Christ's work by considering it in light of the OT. On the other hand, what God disclosed through Christ is prior to the prophets in importance, so that Christ's life, death, and resurrection provide the touchstone for understanding what had previously been said in the Scriptures (Hughes 1979; Weiss 1991, 171–81).

Hebrews' identification of Christ as the "priest according to the order of Melchizedek" is an initial part of the author's presentation of the atoning work of Christ. In the opening section the author cites a portion of Ps 110:1, where the Lord says, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet" (Heb 1:3, 13). Like other early Christians, the author takes this passage as a commentary on Christ's resurrection and exaltation to heavenly glory at God's right hand (Hay 1973). Assuming that Ps 110:1 can be applied to the exalted Christ, the author points out that 110:4 must also pertain to Christ, for it says, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." The same figure is addressed in both verses of the Psalm (Heb 5:10; 6:20; 7:17, 21). Moreover, Christ is uniquely suited to serving as a priest *forever*, since he has risen from the dead and so will not have his term of service ended by death, as is the case with all other priests (7:3, 23–25). Christ serves forever by virtue of his indestructible life (7:16), and from that position "is able for all time to save those who approach God through him" (7:25).

Christ's priestly work is described, in part, using categories of cleanness and uncleanness. Many passages in the Law refer to physical impurity (Neusner 1973, 7–71; Milgrom 1991, 691–1009). People could become unclean by contact with the carcass of an unclean creature (Lev 11:5, 28, 40) or a human corpse (Num 19:11–13), by skin diseases, rotting walls, and emissions from the sexual organs (Lev 13:1–8, 34; 14:43–47; 15:1–33). Uncleanness could also result from sexual misconduct, homicide, and idolatry (18:20–30; Num 35:33–34; Josh 22:17; Jer 2:23), and the notions of uncleanness and purity were extended to sin and righteousness generally (Isa 1:16; 6:5–7; Ps 18:20). Changing one's status from unclean to clean, required a cleansing action, which in most cases meant washing and waiting for a time. More serious forms of impurity required sacrifice, and on the Day of Atonement the high priest offered sacrifices for "purification of sins" (Lev 30:10 LXX).

Hebrews employs the category of cleansing to speak about the effects of Christ's crucifixion by saying that after Christ "made purification for sins" by his death, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb 1:3). The author also shifts the level of discourse from the cleansing of the body to the cleansing of the conscience, for Christ offered himself to "purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (9:14). Like other writers of the period, the author of Hebrews understood the conscience to be one's awareness of sin (Spicq 1994, 3.332–36). An evil conscience resulted from the recognition that one had done wrong, while a good conscience came from a person knowing that he or she had acted rightly, regardless of the opinion of others (10:2, 22; 13:18). The "dead works" that defile the conscience are works of sin. Since Hebrews understands that sin affects all people, the author can assume that every person's conscience is tainted and therefore needs purification.

Cleansing the conscience does not occur through physical contact with Christ's blood, but through the proclamation of the gospel message that evokes faith. Sinful actions proceed out of a relationship with God that is marked by unbelief rather than by faith (3:12–13, 6:1; 10:38; 11:24–25; 12:4). Accordingly, the conscience is cleansed from the impurity of sin when faith is evoked through the proclamation of Christ's death. Christ's blood was shed some years before Hebrews was written, yet the consciences of particular individuals living one or more generations after the event are purified when the message of Christ's self-sacrifice is announced and received through the agency

of the Spirit (2:1–4; 6:4–5; 10:26). Cleansing the conscience does not mean that people become sinless, for sin remains a threat (3:12), but Christ's death is a source of cleansing that remains available to them.

Sanctification, in the strict sense, goes beyond cleansing. To sanctify something is to make it holy or to set it apart from what is common for God. In Levitical practice, a priest was set apart from common people in order to minister in the sanctuary, which was holy. Nothing unholy was to be brought into the presence of God because of the threat of his wrath breaking out against it. Since a sanctuary or holy place was set apart for God, one needed to be sanctified or set apart before entering it. Everything holy had to be clean, but just because something was clean did not mean that it was holy (Milgrom 1991, 732). For example, Israel's camp in the wilderness was laid out in concentric rings. Whatever was common and unclean was relegated to the region outside the camp, but things that were common could be brought into the camp itself as long as they were clean. At the centre of the camp was a courtyard that surrounded the tabernacle, and every person and object that passed from the camp into the outer courts of the tabernacle was to be both clean and holy. Finally, entry into the holy of holies in the innermost part of the tabernacle was restricted to the high priest alone, who could go into that area only after following the strictest procedures for cleansing and sanctification (Dunnill 1992, 80–90).

The opposite of sanctification is profanation, which Hebrews consistently links with sin. Through persistent unbelief people profane the blood of Christ that brings them into a new covenant relationship with God through the agency of the Spirit (Heb 10:29). In addition, immorality and contempt for God's blessings can also make people profane (12:16). Following biblical tradition, Hebrews considers sin to have a contagious quality, affecting both the person who commits it and the community as a whole. When sin takes root, many become defiled (12:15), and if sin defiles, then people need to be sanctified in order to enter God's heavenly sanctuary (10:19–22). As the consummate sacrifice, Christ's blood and death sanctify as well as purify, setting people apart for relationship with God (10:10, 29). Those who are sanctified by faith in what Christ has done have the hope of heavenly glory, for without holiness no one can see the Lord (2:10–11; 12:14). Those whose consciences have been purified by Christ can now come before God boldly in prayer, and in the future they will share God's holiness in heaven (12:10).

Like purification and sanctification, atonement has to do with bringing about a right relationship with God. The basic pattern for atoning action is taken from the biblical ritual for the Day of Atonement, which was the one time of year when Israel's high priest was permitted to pass through the curtain that separated the forecourt of the tabernacle from the holy of holies (Lev 16:1–34). The high priest was to slaughter a bull and bring some of the blood into the holy of holies, sprinkling it seven times before the mercy seat to make atonement for himself and his household. Next the high priest slaughtered a goat and sprinkled its blood before the mercy seat to atone for the people of Israel. After performing rites that cleansed the sanctuary and altar from the defilement they incurred through the sins of the people, the high priest placed his hands on the head of a live goat and made confession for the sins of Israel. The goat was then sent into the wilderness, bearing away the people's iniquities. Finally, the carcasses of the bull and goat that were sacrificed were burned outside the camp.

Hebrews draws imagery from the atonement ritual to convey the significance of Christ's death and exaltation. The author correlates Christ's death on earth with the high priest's sacrifice of victims in the outer part of the tabernacle, and he identifies Jesus' resurrection and exaltation to God's presence in heaven with the high priest's entry into the holy of holies. The way the Levitical high priest shed the blood of sacrifice in the outer court before entering the holy of holies to appear before God is said to foreshadow the way Jesus shed his blood on earth before appearing before God in heaven. At the same time, Hebrews stresses that Christ's sacrifice is as superior to the sacrifices prescribed by the Law as reality is superior to shadow (Heb 8:5; 10:1). The Law's requirement that the Levitical high priests offer sacrifices for themselves as well as for the people demonstrated that the high priests themselves were sinners, whereas Jesus the high priest is without sin (4:15; 5:1–3; 7:27). The animals offered in sacrifice were to be without physical blemish, whereas Christ was without moral or spiritual blemish (9:14). The Levitical high priest may have entered the holy of holies only once each year, but Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary once for all time (9:7, 26). Israel's high priest entered the holy of holies in a sanctuary made by human hands to offer sacrifices that cleansed the flesh, but Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary itself through his resurrection and exaltation, and his sacrifice cleanses the conscience (9:9–10, 14, 24).

According to Hebrews, the effects of the sacrifices that are represented in Israel's Scriptures are realized through Christ's self-offering. First, atonement was sometimes understood as the expiation or removal of the sin that separates people from God. According to Leviticus, the rituals on the Day of Atonement ritual purged Israel from both sin and uncleanness (Lev 16:16, 19); and after the high priest confessed the sins of the people over a goat, the goat was sent into the wilderness, so that it removed the iniquity of the people from the community (Lev 16:22). Similarly, Hebrews understands that the atonement Christ provides entails an actual removal of sin, especially through its purification of the conscience, as noted above (Heb 2:17–18; 9:13–14, 26). Second, atonement was sometimes understood as propitiation or the averting of divine wrath. For example, when Moses learned that God was angry with Israel, he told Aaron to "make atonement for them. For wrath has gone forth from the Lord" (Num 16:46). Hebrews has a vivid sense of the threat of divine wrath against sin and unbelief (Heb 3:7–4:13; 10:26–31; 12:29), and the author recognizes that Christ's sacrifice delivers people from judgment precisely by removing the sin that brings divine wrath. When faith is evoked sin is displaced, and where people relate rightly to God in faith there is no cause for judgment.

New covenant imagery underscores the definitive quality of Christ's work (Backhaus 1996; Frey 1996; Lehne 1990; Dunnill 1992, 123–34; Isaacs 1992, 115–26). The prophet Jeremiah said that in the days to come God would make a new covenant that would be qualitatively different from the one made at Mount Sinai, for under it God would put his laws on human minds and hearts; he would no longer remember their sin and iniquity, but they would be his people and he would truly be their God (Jer 31:31–34; Heb 8:8–12). Since the author of Hebrews drew on the images of the Day of Atonement to show that Christ's death is the definitive sacrifice for sin, he can now point to Christ's act of atonement as the fulfilment of the new covenant promise. Jeremiah's new covenant oracle said that God would show mercy toward human sin, without specifying how God would do this. Hebrews argues that through his self-offering Christ provides the definitive means of obtaining the forgiveness envisioned by the new covenant (10:11–18). Moreover, since the old covenant was established at Mount Sinai by a sacrifice, the author assumes that the new covenant should be put in place through a sacrifice—Christ's sacrifice (Exod 24:3–8; Heb 9:15–22). Through these overlapping biblical

images, Hebrews seeks to show that Christ's self-sacrifice is the definitive means of atonement that inaugurates God's new covenant of mercy.

The new covenant may have been put in place, but Hebrews recognizes that not all of its promises have been realized. Under the new covenant, God deals decisively with sin through the death of Christ, yet the author of Hebrews recognizes that sin and unbelief continue to threaten his readers (3:7–4:13). According to Jeremiah, God promised to write his will on human hearts, yet the hearts of the readers were still subject to forces that could draw their hearts away from God (3:12). The new covenant oracle envisioned a time when people would no longer need to be instructed concerning God, yet the author of Hebrews found that he needed to continue teaching and exhorting his readers in the faith (3:13; 5:12; 13:22). God may have promised that through the new covenant he would keep a people for himself, but some in the Christian community were drifting away (10:25). According to Hebrews, Christ's self-offering does not mean that sin has vanished, but that people have a means of dealing with the ongoing threat of sin as they seek to live faithfully in anticipation of the final fulfilment of God's saving purposes.

Hebrews earlier used the pattern of the wilderness generation to distinguish the initial gift of liberation from entry into God's promised rest. Now the author distinguishes the atonement that has already been given from the salvation that is yet to come: "Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (9:28). The passage refers to the hope for Christ's return that was common in early Christian preaching (e.g., 1 Thess 1:10; 4:15–16; 1 Cor 15:23; Phil 3:20; 1 Pet 1:7; Matt 24:30; 26:64). Hebrews creatively weaves this hope into its priestly portrayal of Christ. The author had spoken of Christ the high priest entering the heavenly sanctuary through his death and exaltation (9:24), and now pictures the faithful as the crowd that waited for the priest outside the sanctuary (Sir 50:5: Luke 1:10; Bruce 1990, 232–33; Lane 1991, 250).

Traditional Levitical practices stipulated that everyone except the high priest was to remain outside the inner part of the sanctuary and that unauthorized persons who entered were liable to death (Num 4:20; 17:13). In a remarkable shift, however, Hebrews speaks of the faithful following the high priest into the sanctuary (Dunnill 1992, 231–34). In Heb 6:19–20, the author calls readers to seize the

hope that lies before them, which had entered the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus the high priest had gone as their forerunner. Now, after considering the high priestly work of Christ, the author tells them that they have "confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh)," for they have "a great high priest over the house of God" (10:19–21). The purifying and sanctifying work of Christ has prepared them to enter the holy presence of God (Grässer 1993, 129).

The invitation to enter the sanctuary marks the culmination of a series of priestly images, much as entering God's rest was the climax of the images from the exodus and wilderness wanderings in 2:10–4:11. As high priest, Jesus purifies and sanctifies people so that they might rightly come before God. Both the images of rest and sanctuary direct readers to the everlasting life with God, which is the outcome of his saving purposes. To enter rest is not merely to enter a place, but to enter God's own rest, a rest that is inseparable from God himself. Similarly, one would enter the holy of holies precisely to encounter God. Salvation in its full and final sense means that sin and death are overcome so that people find abiding life in everlasting relationship with God.

5. Losing and Obtaining Salvation

Before considering the final section of Hebrews, attention must be given to the warnings about the possible loss of salvation, since these play an important role in the text. When reading the warnings, we do well to consider both their logic and their function. Warnings are given to bring a change that will avert disaster. People issue warnings because both the danger and the hope of deliverance are real. In Hebrews the warnings of God's judgment work together with the promises of God's salvation. People respond properly to a warning when they heed it, and they respond properly to a promise when they trust it (Philo, *Rewards* 163). The warnings and promises function differently—a warning disturbs while a promise gives assurance—but they serve the same end, which is that the readers might persevere in faith.

One of the sharpest warnings reads: "For it is impossible to restore to repentance those who have once been enlightened, who have

tasted the heavenly gift, and become partakers of the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, but who then fall away, since they crucify the Son of God to themselves and make a spectacle of him" (6:4–6). Perhaps surprisingly, the warning presupposes that God is the giver of manifold blessings (Löhr 1994, 197–205). The author speaks of the "enlightened", using an image that commonly connoted moving from sin to faith (Acts 26:18; *T. Gad* 5:7), from ignorance to knowledge (Pss 19:8; 109:130; Sir 45:17; *Jos. Asen.* 8:9), and from death to life (Dan 12:2; John 8:12; Col 1:12). The verb is in the passive voice with God understood to be the active subject. Enlightenment is God's gift. The same is true of the "heavenly gift". The author does not specify what the gift is, but elsewhere uses "heavenly" for the Christian's calling, which comes from heaven and leads to heaven (Heb 3:1). Since human beings cannot enter heaven on their own, tasting a heavenly gift only occurs if God grants it. Similarly, the Holy Spirit comes to people from the God who is holy, and the "good word" they receive is God's word. Finally, "the powers of the age to come" are powers from God, since "the world to come" is subject to divine rule (2:5) and "the city that is to come" is the heavenly Jerusalem, where God's purposes are brought to completion (12:22; 13:14). At each point the author speaks of those who have received blessings from God.

The warning next refers to the blessed falling away from God. The author does not say why anyone who received God's gifts would fall away, but he makes clear that this rejection does not stem from ignorance of God, since the enlightened have, by definition, come to knowledge of the truth. It also goes beyond simple drift, neglect, or sluggishness (2:1, 3; 5:11; 6:12), to a repudiation of what God has done. Earlier the author emphasized that those who recognize their need for mercy may always turn confidently to Christ's throne of grace for help and grace (2:17–18; 4:14–16). Here the warning concerns those who "crucify the Son of God to themselves and make a spectacle of him" (6:6). Crucifixion brings death, and death brings an end to relationship. The active subject of this verb is the person rather than God, so that the imagery does not refer to God ending a relationship with a person but to a person terminating a relationship that God initiated.[7]

[7] The prefix ανα- on the verb ἀνασταυρόω is sometimes taken to mean that apostates crucify Jesus again (NIV; NRSV; Lane 1991, 133; Ellingworth 1993, 324),

Questions arise as to why God would not restore such a person to repentance. Various answers have been proposed, but the most viable approach comes from the internal logic of the passage.[8] Since God initiates relationships with people by bringing them to repentance, he could presumably reinstate relationships by bringing the apostates to repentance again if he chose to do so. Yet Hebrews assumes that what God would offer them is precisely what they rejected: the Spirit, his word, and enlightenment. By refusing to restore apostates, God permits their decision to stand and thereby allows the relationship to be terminated.

The analogy that follows the warning makes the same point. People are compared to land on which rain has richly fallen (Heb 6:7–8). Rain is an apt image for blessing because rain cannot be created by human agency; it can only be a gift from God (Deut 11:11–12; Isa 55:10). The author next raises the prospect of the well-watered field producing thorns and thistles, which represent sin and rejection (Nah 1:10; Prov 22:5; Philo *Alleg. Interp.* 3.248). The point is that showering more grace on those who utterly reject God would encourage sin in the way that sending more rain upon a weedy field would help the thistles grow. Therefore, God can be expected to bring a fiery judgment on those who reject his grace, like a farmer would burn a field to deal with an infestation of thorns and thistles (Heb 6:8).

When reading this stark passage, it is important to consider the intended *effect* of the warning along with its meaning. Immediately after giving the warning, the author makes clear that it is designed to motivate readers to perseverance, not to drive them to despair. He is confident that the future holds better things for them, "things that belong to salvation" (6:9), and he matches the warning with a word of promise. It may be impossible (ἀδύνατον) for apostates to be restored to repentance, but it is also impossible (ἀδύνατον) for

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but this is unlikely. The compound form of the verb normally has the simple meaning of "crucify" (Josephus, *Ant.* 1.97; 2.75; Attridge 1989, 171). The dative case on ἑαυτοῖς is sometimes taken to mean that apostates crucify Jesus "on their own account" (NRSV) or "to their own loss" (NIV; Lane 1991, 133; Ellingworth 1993, 325), but a more plausible reading is that they crucify Christ "to themselves", since crucifixion means death and death ends relationship (Rom 7:2–3; Gal 6:14).

[8] Some suggest that people are brought to repentance only once because Christ was sacrificed once (Attridge 1989, 169; Weiss 1991, 349; Grässer 1990, 310), although others find it unlikely that singular atonement means singular repentance (Löhr 1994, 242–49). For more extended treatment of these and other proposals see Koester (2001, 319–20).

God to prove false to his promises to bless Abraham and his heirs (6:18). The readers must persevere in faith because the threat of divine judgment is real, but they *can* persevere because the promise of divine salvation is also real. The warning disturbs while the promise assures, but they serve the same end, which is that the readers might persevere in faith and so receive the salvation that God alone can provide (6:12).

The same interplay between warning and promise appears at the end of the second series of arguments. The warning reads: "For if we persist in sinning wilfully after receiving knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but, shall we say, a terrifying prospect of judgment and fiery zeal that is coming to consume those who stand in opposition" (10:26–27). Such an opponent is one who has "trampled upon the Son of God and considered profane the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and was insolent toward the Spirit of grace" (10:29). As before, the author makes clear that he speaks of those who repudiate what God gives. Since knowledge of the truth is a gift from God, those who sin wilfully after receiving it reject what God has given. The shedding of Christ's blood inaugurated the new covenant through which God promised to show mercy toward sinners, and this gift comes to people through the Spirit of grace. Therefore, to reject God's Son and the new covenant is to despise the grace of God. If Christ's self-offering is the definitive sacrifice for sin, then those who spurn it have no other basis upon which to relate rightly to God. By rejecting divine grace, people embrace divine wrath.

As before, the author issues the warning to motivate people in faith, not make them give up hope. The stark depiction of the judgments that await those who spurn God's grace is accompanied by an encouraging remembrance of the readers' past faithfulness in a time of persecution. The author stresses that they had reason to be faithful in the face of opposition because God has promised them a superior and lasting possession (10:34). The confidence that God will be true to his promises gives readers a reason to persevere (10:35–36), and the author affirms that they do in fact have the faith that will issue into the preservation of their souls (10:39). The warnings are given in order to startle readers into a renewed awareness of the dangers of drifting into unbelief, while the promises are repeated in order to give them incentive to remain faithful to Christ and the Christian community. In their different ways, these two types of speech serve

the same purpose. Now, having ended a section by encouraging the readers in faith, the author now begins a new series of arguments that will surround the readers with a company of faithful men and women to embolden them on their way.

6. Foreigners on Earth and Citizens of Heavenly Jerusalem

The third series of arguments begins by declaring that faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen, and it culminates by bringing the unseen realm of hope into view through a depiction of life in God's heavenly city (11:1–2; 12:22–24). If the vision of the heavenly city marks the goal of God's saving work, the stories of the heroes and heroines of faith that precede it show that barriers confront the people who look for the realization of God's promises. Certain threats arise from divine judgment, as in the case of Noah (11:7), or natural death, as in the stories of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (11:20–22), but special attention is given to social conflict and to the marginalization, suffering, and death that arise from it.

Abraham left his country because God promised him another place as an inheritance; but he and his family found themselves living in the Promised Land as though they were foreigners (11:8–9). Similarly, God had promised that Abraham and Sarah would have a multitude of descendants, and even though they were beyond childbearing years, they did have a son (11:11). Nevertheless, a single son is far less than a countless multitude of descendants. Therefore, the author distinguishes the word of promise from the fulfilment of the promise. He says, "These all died in faith, without having received the things that were promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar" (11:13). If the word of promise is the basis of their hope, the realization of the promise marks the consummation of their hope.

Living between promise and fulfilment, Abraham and his family are identified as social outsiders. By emphasizing this aspect of their identity, the author helps correlate their situation with that of the readers (Eisenbaum 1997, 154–61). After receiving God's promise of an inheritance, Abraham and Sarah were dislocated both geographically and socially, since they left their ancestral home for places where they resided as aliens (παρῴκησεν, 11:10). Right up to the time of Sarah's death, Abraham confessed that he remained a for-

eigner and a transient, and Hebrews finds this to be an apt commentary on the whole story (Gen 23:4 LXX; Heb 11:13). In antiquity, foreigners and transients (ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοι) were not entitled to full participation in civic life and were liable to expulsion by those in authority (11:13). It was understood that as a ruler was above a subject and a master above a slave, so the citizen was above the foreigner, who lacked rights (Balsdon 1979; Feldmeier 1996). By analogy to Abraham, the readers of Hebrews received promises of an inheritance in Christ's kingdom when they accepted the gospel message (1:14; 2:3). Their faith, in turn, brought social dislocation. The readers may not have moved geographically, but like Abraham and Sarah they found themselves regarded as outsiders in their wider community (10:32–34; 13:13; deSilva 2000, 18–20).

Hebrews addresses this issue by affirming that God will keep his promises in a manner that will overcome social marginalization and physical death. Although the OT speaks of Abraham travelling to Canaan (Gen 12:5), Hebrews says that Abraham "awaited the *city* with foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb 11:10). The idea that God's promise to Abraham would be fulfilled in a city had some precedents in tradition (Philo, *Alleg. Interp.* 3.83; *Confusion* 78; *Dreams* 1.46, 181), and Hebrews draws on this tradition in a way that points to a social fulfilment of the promise (Rose 1994, 223). In common practice many foreigners put their hopes on the opportunities provided by earthly cities. Writing in the first century, Seneca observed how many aliens poured into Rome, only to be disappointed. "Most of them, you will find, have left home and come to Rome, the greatest and loveliest city in the world—but not theirs" (*Helv.* 6.2–3). Hebrews, however, insists that the God who called Abraham and Sarah "has prepared a city *for them*" (Heb 11:16). A sense of belonging is integral to the promise. Moreover, Abraham and Sarah may have died before fully receiving what was promised, but death will not bar them from God's city. The author speaks of God fulfilling the promise in a heavenly city, an idea that again has some precedents in tradition (11:16; *2 Bar.* 4:1–4; Gal 4:26; Phil 3:20; *4 Ezra* 7:26; Rev 21:2). Drawing on this tradition, Hebrews points to a fulfilment of God's promise that will transcend the limitations of mortality. Abraham and Sarah may have died as foreigners on earth, but in heaven they will live as citizens (Heb 12:22–24).

Another example is Moses, who was raised as a son of Pharaoh's daughter but relinquished this status in order to identify with the

people of God and to share their ill treatment (11:24–25). To emphasize the importance of openly identifying with the community of faith, Hebrews uses a creative anachronism to show the similarity between the situation of Moses and that of the readers: Moses "considered abuse suffered for Christ to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his reward" (11:26). The genitive case in τὸν ὀνειδισμὸν τοῦ χριστοῦ can be construed in two ways. On one level it can mean that Moses suffered verbal abuse *like* the abuse Christ suffered, yet on a second level, the expression can refer to verbal abuse suffered *for the sake of* one's faith in Christ, which is what happened to the community addressed by Hebrews (Ellingworth 1993, 614; Rose 1994, 280–81; deSilva 2000, 409–11). The dual meaning allows the readers to see their context mirrored in Moses' story. If Moses was verbally threatened and lost his claim to earthly wealth because he identified with God's people, some of the readers of Hebrews were also harassed and suffered the loss of possessions because of their loyalty to other Christians (10:32–34). If Moses shared ill treatment with an enslaved people, some in the Christian community similarly shared the suffering of those who were imprisoned and otherwise abused because of their faith (10:34). The author calls readers to build up the community through such practices of mutual support (10:25; 13:3).

Moses remained faithful because he was confident of a reward, and the readers are called to do the same (10:35; 11:26). Hebrews' use of the language of reward for the outcome of salvation is based on confidence in the justice and faithfulness of God. Suffering might be considered a just reward for sin (2:2). The problem was that both Moses and the Christians addressed by Hebrews suffered not because of wrongdoing but because of their commitments to God and his people. For God to allow abuse and dispossession of the faithful to be his final word would be unjust. The author of Hebrews, however, remains convinced that God is just and faithful to his promises (6:9–18). Therefore, saying that Moses persevered in the hope of receiving a reward means that Moses remained confident that God would not allow injustice to triumph, but would bless his people as he had promised.

The rapid listing of other examples of faith at the conclusion of Hebrews 11 recalls some cases in which God vindicated the righteous in this world. Israel's judges, kings, and prophets sometimes "conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths

of lions, shut the mouths of lions," and otherwise prevailed against great opposition (11:32–35a). But in other cases, the faithful were tortured, mocked, flogged, and imprisoned; some were stoned or killed with the sword, and others were reduced to lives of destitution (11:35b–38). In earthly terms these faithful people were not saved from their opponents. Nevertheless, the author of Hebrews affirms that God's saving purposes will be carried out on a transcendent level.

The author says, "Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not received what was promised, since God had provided something better, so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect" (11:39–40). The verb τελειόω, which is usually translated "make perfect", might better be rendered "make complete", since it is based on the root τελ-, which involves bringing something to its goal or τέλος. In this context the verb refers to bringing God's purposes to their goal. The author makes clear that being incomplete means not having received what God promised, and that people are made complete when God's promises are fully realized. A strong social dimension is assumed in this passage, for the author says that the faithful of previous generations are not made complete "apart from us." Put positively, God's promises are realized for all the faithful together—the faithful of previous generations along with the followers of Jesus.

Completion brings human beings into an eternal relationship with God, in which people share Christ's glory (2:10), enter God's rest and his heavenly sanctuary (4:9–10; 10:19–22), and join in the festal gathering in the heavenly Jerusalem (Peterson 1982, 128–29). Completion involves overcoming sin by the cleansing and sanctification of the believer (9:9; 10:1–2, 14), as well as overcoming death by the believer's resurrection (11:35). Just as Christ was made complete by his suffering, resurrection, and exaltation to everlasting glory at God's right hand (2:10; 5:9–10), his followers are made complete when they are brought to heavenly glory by being raised from the dead through the grace provided by the pioneer of salvation (2:10; 12:23).

Heavenly Jerusalem is the way the author pictures this community of the saved. If the faithful in Hebrews 11 were not made complete, the heavenly Jerusalem is the place where all the righteous are "made complete", for here is where God's promises are fully kept (τελειόω, 12:23). The faithful were foreigners and transients on the earth, but in the heavenly Jerusalem they are registered in the civic assembly. In ordinary usage, registration established one's identity as a citizen.

For example, each legitimate child of a Roman citizen would be registered within thirty days of birth. A copy of the registration would be given to the father as proof of the child's citizenship, helping to ensure that the child would receive the benefits of citizenship, such as fair legal treatment and material help. When used of the heavenly city, registration means that the faithful are given all the blessings of life in God's kingdom.

Those who are registered as citizens belong to the "assembly" in the heavenly Zion. Although ἐκκλησία is often translated "church", the term was not uniquely used for Christian assemblies. Greek cities in the ancient world were governed by assemblies of citizens. Under Roman imperial rule, the powers of civic assemblies were more limited, but local assemblies continued to function (Acts 19:39) and noncitizens aspired to membership. The readers of Hebrews belonged to a Christian assembly whose members were evidently regarded as marginal by the wider society, but the author gives this beleaguered group the encouragement of a future in which they would be fully recognized members of the assembly in God's city.

The redeemed celebrate in a festal gathering or πανήγυρις, a word widely used for civic festivals in Greco-Roman cities (Spicq 1994, 3.4–8). Such gatherings typically included people from all social classes and attracted visitors from many parts of the country. Appropriately, the festal gathering in God's city includes a multitude of angels together with the righteous from Abel onward. Moreover, athletic competitions like those at Olympia, Isthmia, and other cities, were frequently called festal gatherings. Modifying this imagery, Hebrews pictures the faithful persevering in the race of faith on earth (12:1–2, 12–13), so that arrival in the heavenly city marks the festive completion of the contest rather than its beginning. Finally, the citizens of Greco-Roman cities deemed festal gatherings to be occasions for peace and celebration, and these joyous connotations are fitting for life in God's city.

7. Conclusion

Hebrews addresses a group of readers who cannot see God's promises of salvation realized in their own experience. In response, the author seeks to bolster their faith by helping them "see" the outcome of God's saving work through a rich collection of images from Israel's tradition

and the Greco-Roman world in which they live. The author not only reaffirms that they are heirs of salvation, but creates a mosaic of OT texts that offers them a glimpse of the present glory of the Son, who already reigns at God's right hand, where the faithful will share in glory. He takes them through the wilderness toward God's promised rest, he invites them to follow through the veil of the sanctuary and into the presence of God, and he finally brings them to the festal gathering in the heavenly city. "Do you see, friend, how he takes you along with him through the country and turns hearing into sight?" (Longinus, *Subl.* 262). His language makes visible the salvation that is otherwise invisible, so that by taking hold of their hope with the eye of faith, they might be moved to a renewed confidence that God will bring his saving work to its full and final realization.

Each image allows the author to distinguish what the readers have already received from what the faithful will receive in the future. Such distinctions help the readers make sense of their experience. Their life in the world falls far short of the kingdom of God, but that does not mean God has abandoned them. Instead, they have reason to be confident that what God has begun, God will bring to completion. In the gospel message the readers received the promise of an inheritance, which will be followed in due time by the inheritance itself. They have been given the liberating message of Christ's death and resurrection, which is like the exodus in that it sets its recipients on a journey that will later culminate in God's promised rest. Atonement has been made so that the way into the sanctuary is open for them to enter; and life in God's heavenly city awaits even those like Abraham and Sarah, who experience disappointment and death in this world. Salvation remains God's gift, and the people of God are called to persevere in the conviction that the One who promised the gift will be true to his word.

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CHAPTER TWO

SIMPLE SALVATION, BUT NOT OF STRAW. . . . JACOBEAN SOTERIOLOGY

J. Eugene Botha
University of South Africa

1. Introduction: A Place for James?

There can be no doubt that Luther's indictment of James as an "Epistle of Straw" has created a certain "stigma" around it. This is especially the case in the views of scholars since the 16th century about Christianity, where the Pauline brand of Christianity was the dominant paradigm.

The dominant assumption has remained that James was at loggerheads with the thought and writings of Paul, and James' practical wisdom seems to be in conflict with Paul's explicit teaching of justification by faith alone. The Pauline paradigm was seen as representative of all of early Christianity, and anything that clashed with this was relegated to a secondary position, and thus of marginal importance. James suffered this fate for a long time at the hands of New Testament scholarship.

Patrick Hartin (1999, 3–8) argues that the Letter of James is being re-evaluated in recent times and that there is a new and growing appreciation for and interest in the book. He ascribes it to a number of factors, such as a new appreciation for the huge diversity within early Christendom;[1] and the fact that James is now increasingly being read independently of Paul,[2] This has generated a new appreciation

[1] Hartin (1999, 3) says that the 1971 translation of Walter Bauer's *book Rechglaubigkeit und Ketzerei in altesten Chirstentum* (Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity, tr R. A. Kraft & G. Krodel, Philadelphia: Fortress), has sparked a new appreciation for many different valid strands of early Christian belief, instead of a view of a monolithic growth of the movement.

[2] Hartin (1999:4) quotes Luke Timothy Johnson (1995, 114) saying: "The most important gain from breaking the Pauline fixation is that it liberates James to be read in terms of 108 verses, rather 12 verses, in terms of its own voice rather than in terms of its supposed muting of Paul's voice."

of James' unique contribution to the texture of early Christian belief; the utilization of new methodologies in New Testament interpretation (like sociological methods and literary critical readings); a greater appreciation for the community dimension in James; and the fact that what separates James "from other New Testament writings is its theological rather than Christological approach" (Hartin 1999, 6).

This means that James is not seen as a "baptized" or "Christianized" Jewish writing, but rather an inherently Christian document with its own unique theology. Hartin (1999, 7) further argues that James is also important in terms of the quest for the historical Jesus, especially in Q studies, where the similarities between James and the teaching of Jesus in the Gospels have been amply demonstrated (see Kittel 1942; Mussner 1981; Davids 1985; Hartin 1988, 1991, 1996).

In this context, it affirms James as an authentic and valuable independent tradition to the saying tradition found in the Gospels and Q. All of the above has resulted in a new appreciation of James; a move away form the "Epistle of Straw" injunction to a view where the unique and authentic contribution of James leading to a fuller understanding of the rich diversity of early Christian teaching and soteriology can be fully appreciated in a post-modern time. Hartin (1999, 3) states:

> Against that backdrop, the letter of James comes into its own right. Instead of being an embarrassment to the hegemony of Pauline Christianity, it becomes a marvelous representative of another branch of early Christianity, one that presents the Christian message in very different terms . . . In our present postmodern world where diversity is treasured for the wealth that different cultures, perspectives, beliefs, etc., bring, the letter of James with its distinctiveness and difference resonates with this postmodern consciousness.

2. James: A Challenging Text

2.1. *James As Historical Problem*

The letter of James gained slow acceptance in early Christianity. The Muratorian Canon, commonly dated in the middle of the second century CE, does not have James on its list. Eusebius in the fourth century names James as one of the "disputed" books. Jerome (*De Vir. ill. 2*) also attests to a slow acceptance of James, and says that while the letter could possibly have been written by James, the brother of

Jesus, it could have been "published under his name by some one else."

Even to this day there is no clear and unanimous answer to the question on the authorship of the Letter of James. Views differ on James the Just, the brother of Jesus and the leader of the early church in Jerusalem. This would mean that a fairly early date for the letter could be posited; perhaps as early as 50–60 CE.

Josephus in *Ant.* (20.199–201) refers to the death of this James under the high priest Ananus. In looking at James, a good case can be made for an early dating and a close link with early Judean Christianity (the Jewish nature, the eschatology, the authority claimed by the author, lack of references to Paul, observance of the Law, close links with Q tradition, addressed to those in the Diaspora).[3]

In true theological fashion, the opposite case is also made with an equally compelling argument. This view ascribes James to a post-apostolic pseudonymous author, dating from as late as 130 CE. The premise here is the excellent Greek, knowledge of the LXX, close alignment with style of Didache and 1 Peter, its late appearance and acceptance in the early church, the address to those in the Diaspora.[4] The bottom line is: we cannot be sure about author or dating at all. These scholarly disputes also embrace questions regarding audience, place of writing, structure. When all is said and done, the impression from the literature is that there is very little consensus about historical matters pertaining to James, leading to a wide variety of interpretations. Perhaps the only consensus we can really find about James is that to all interpreters it is clear that James has been considered, and still is being considered, rather *sui generis* in terms of its content.

Perhaps more compelling and fruitful clues for understanding James' soteriology do not, therefore, lie in a traditional historical approach, where the traditional historical critical introduction rubrics of authorship, place of writing, dating and audience are considered and severely disputed, but lie, rather, in looking at the text itself as a point of departure, and also utilizing other methodologies such as social scientific criticism.

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[3] This view is supported by scholars such as Childs (1984), Mussner, (1987), Wuellner (1978), Adamson (1989), Hartin (1991).

[4] Supporters of this view include Dibelius (1975), Vielhauer (1975), Ludemann (1989), Vouga (1984).

2.2. *The Problem of James and Soteriology*

Looking at James in terms of soteriology is also quite problematic. Wachob (2000, 25) observes that scholars working on James "obsessively focus on one of two areas: either the concentrate on issues relating to the letter's historical setting, which as a rule is reduced to the questions on the relationship with Paul, or they grapple with difficulties involving its literary aspects. The research suggests that the letter is one of the most difficult texts of the New Testament to locate historically, theologically and literarily." In terms of viewing the theology and soteriology of James, ever since the days of Luther the book has been viewed as promoting a "legalistic understanding of Christianity in fundamental opposition to Paul's gospel of freedom from the law" (Wachob 2000, 31).

It was considered to be of little theological integrity, and merely a book of moralistic instruction, with a special emphasis on rich-poor relations. This is understandable. On the surface James seems indeed to consist of loosely strung-together sets of moral instructions, with very little theological reflection. Dibelius (1975, 3–11) characterizes the book of James as belonging to the literary genre of paraenesis and is convinced that it consists of a loose collection of sayings, very similar to the sayings of Jesus in Q, but without any coherence.

Wachob (2002, 37) explains that the following characteristics apply to this: "Eclecticism, lack of continuity or thoughtful progression, merely external (catchword) connection between admonitions, repetition of the same motifs, and the lack of a single situation in which all the admonitions would fit. . . ." On the basis of this, he (Dibelius—JEB) concludes that "James is devoid of theology."

This view is still held by many to this day. James' focus is indeed on the practical living of faith, with very little reflection and actual theologizing like Paul. However, a close reading of the text, and an examination of the type of community that arises from this reading in terms of its social setting, could give us some pointers on how this community construed their faith, and how they viewed salvation. But what we must stress here is that our eventual observations on the soteriology of the book of James are deduced from conclusions we draw on the type and nature of the texts, its genre, the social dynamics implicit in the text, and the eschatological framework of the text.

At this point it is also necessary to point out that James' argumentation is theological and not Christological. James only refers to

Jesus twice (1:1; 2:1), but twenty eight times to God (sixteen times to God (θεός), eight times to Lord (κύριος), three times to Father, and once to Lawgiver and Judge. It seems that James is monotheistic (Jas 2, 19 also see Mussner 1981:97) by these clear instructions for absolute loyalty to God.[5]

Wall (1997:294) also remarks that James has been viewed by many as a Jewish writing that has been Christianized by the addition of a few references to Jesus. Whatever the case, James is clearly theological rather than Christological and interpretations of soteriology and the like will have to keep cognizance of this fact.

3. Exploring James with a View to Its Soteriology

In trying to set up a framework for understanding the soteriology of James we will be looking at the following: the literary genre of the text, the very strong focus on the group/community, the strong eschatological expectation, and the question of a unifying theme in James.

3.1. *Literary Genre: Wisdom Teaching*

Perhaps one of the clues in understanding James lies in its literary genre. This aspect has also been in dispute for a long time (see Johnson 1995, 16–26), but it is crucial for the understanding of a literary work that its genre is defined. One of the problems with the book of James is that its structure is not clear. Following Dibelius (1975, 11), many scholars have viewed James merely as "a text which strings together admonitions of general ethical content," and while the practical wisdom is appreciated, its theological (and thus soteriological) nature is somewhat denigrated, if not denied.

Dibelius' conclusions are problematic, but quite influential, and still influence perceptions of James. Genre is very important as "the identification of the genre of a work helps to determine its message, because its structure is deliberately chosen for the purpose of communication." Determining genre is therefore not optional, but seminal

[5] That James does not have a Christology is disputed by some interpreters. Wall (1997, 295–297), for example, has a section where he deals with the Christology of James. See also Townsend (1994, xxviii).

to understanding any literary work. In recent years it seems that there has been a slow consensus towards aligning James with wisdom literature.

Halson (1968, 308–314) has shown that a large number of the 37 *hapax legomena* found in James can be traced or aligned to "Septuagintal Wisdom Literature". Hartin (1991, 1996 and 1999) argues strongly that James, while conforming to the form of a letter, belongs to the literary genre of wisdom literature. He (1999, 42–45) points out that James conforms to many characteristic of Jewish wisdom literature such as:

> *Wisdom sayings and admonitions* as in Jas 2:13 ("For Judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment")
>
> *Wisdom forms of comparison* such as Jas 3:6 ("The tongue is a fire") and Jas 1:23 ("For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror. . . .")
>
> *Beatitudes* like Jas 1:12 ("Blessed is anyone who endures temptation . . .") and Jas 1:25 (. . . And they will be blessed in their doing")
>
> *Woes* like Jas 4: 13–17 ("Come now you who say . . .") and Jas 5:1–6 ("Come now you rich people)

Hartin (1999, 45) also argues that in addition to these formal wisdom characteristics, James also deals with traditional Hebrew wisdom themes such as *testing of one's faith* (Jas 1:2; Prov 27:21; Job 1–2), *control of the tongue* (Jas 1:26: Sir 5:13) *and concern for the poor* (Jas 1:27; Prov 19:17; 31, 9). From the above it is clear that James indeed show signs of being extremely familiar with Jewish wisdom writings, and that the whole of James should be read in this light. It is also of significance for understanding Jacobean soteriology.

3.2. *Strong Group Focus*

In addition, and following Dibelius' (1975, 21) characterization of James' wisdom teaching as paraenesis, Hartin (1999, 45–49) also characterizes the function of James as paraenesis and protreptic. The wisdom teaching of James is thus designed as paraenesis and its aim is "to encourage a group to continue the life they have begun, or to further direct them on another course of action that writer sets forth" (Hartin 1999, 46).

According to Berger and Luckmann (1966, 120), part of the function of paraenetic utterances is social formation, where admonitions are made to strengthen the induction "of an individual into the objective world of a society or a sector of it." This is what James is doing; he is reminding his readers of the shared common values of their particular group that sets them apart from other groups around them.

Malina (1982, 1986, 1993) has pointed out how important group identity, real kinship and fictive kinship relations were in the first century Mediterranean world—it fully determined the identities of individuals. In modern western societies, kinship does not play such an important institutional or structural role, but in antiquity kinship was one of the primary ways of structuring social life. By reminding members of such a fictive kinship group of their common identity (twelve tribes in the diaspora [1:1], brothers [2, 16, 19, etc.]) and the values and attitudes that set then apart from other groups in their society, James entrenches their identity as a group, and serves to continue to regulate social behaviour in this group. The injunction of James and his paraenesis serves to strengthen their identity in a world which seems somewhat hostile towards them. They are actually reminded in Jas 1:27 to keep themselves unstained from the outside world.

This is extremely important for James' community. In our modern Western society we can belong to many groups at the same time without having any conflicts. In antiquity this was not the case. Because the social order was dominated by group/kinship allegiances, membership or alliance with another group was not permitted. A person who was part of a particular kinship or fictive kinship group, like the fictive kinship group ("the twelve tribes in the diaspora") could not show any allegiance to any other group, and hence the strong condemnation of people of double-mind (1:8; 4:8), of people meddling with the outside world (1:27), and people who have faith but no deeds (2:14).

In the admonitions in 3:9–12, we find the same theme—there are no grey areas or middle ground; you are either one or the other. Friendship with the world implies hatred towards God (4:4). It is one or the other. The statement in 4:17: "Anyone then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins," also makes sense in this context—there is no neutral ground for any member of an ancient group.

We also find this strong group sense and allegiance elsewhere in the New Testament. In Revelations 3:15–16, neutrality is strongly condemned, and Jesus in the Gospels remarks: "Those who are not for us, are against us." Belonging to a specific (fictive) kinship group in antiquity implied absolute loyalty, and compliance with the conditions set out for members of that community. No individual action or interpretation or deviance was allowed.

This was also the ethos of the community of James, and it is clear that any conduct that did not reflect complete and utter compliance with the rules of the community would be severely condemned. Compliance with the rules was crucial for the survival of a group, and anything that threatened a group, like internal strife, discord, challenges and behaviour that could lead to it, were severely frowned upon.

In James, the condemnation of those who do not show mercy, who show favouritism, do not control the tongue, commit adultery, overindulge, slander others in the community, and so on, is extremely severe. All of these things could lead to disharmony, and threaten the survival and identity of the group. Again it must be stressed that James speaks primarily to the fictive kinship group defined as the twelve tribes in the diaspora, and the guidelines he gives are aimed at that community. The poor are the poor in the community; not outside the community; the rich are those who are part of the community, they are not from outside the community. James' injunctions pertain only to his group, not to others outside the group—he does even bother to address them.

In interpreting James, we must realize that James is addressing a group, a community, and in line with the ancient Mediterranean worldview, it is the group that is important, not the individual. James' teaching is group teaching, and in this way is directed at individuals. Individual behaviour is constituted and regulated by the community and focused on their well-being. Neither the individual nor those outside the community determine the behaviour. The in-group of James' community, and how the common life is lived within this group, are basically all that matters to James, and this is the focus of his theology. It is not a universal theology, but a group theology, and this has some serious implications for understanding James.

3.3. *Eschatological Framework*

The book of James also seems to emphasize eschatology. In Jas 5:1–6 we read that the "day of slaughter" is near, as is the "day of the

Lord". In fact, the book seems to be framed by eschatological concepts. James opens his letter to the twelve tribes in the diaspora, and looks forward to their eschatological hope of being reconstituted as such (see Hartin 1999, 51). Davids (1982, 39) also confirms this: "Yet eschatology is not the burden of the book; it is the context of the book."

The judgment of God is an ever present reality for James (3:1, 4:11–12), as is the promise that for those who persevere there will be "a crown of life" (1:12), and that the coming of the Judge is imminent (5:9). Penner (1996, 212) also concludes that the community instruction in James is directed at a community who sees themselves as living at the end of times; the "last days".

Because the judgment is so near, the exhortation to stand firm and to become "perfect" makes much sense. And because the end is so near, some "testing" (1:2, 1:12) will occur. The eschatological term "distress", used regarding widows and orphans in 1:26, is a common apocalyptic term found in other apocalypses (see Schlier 1972, 142) denoting the suffering of the faithful awaiting the "day of the Lord". This suffering is also an indication of how close the *parousia* actually is—for James and his community it is about to take place.

James also emphasizes that waiting for the *parousia* should be accompanied by joy (1:2). "The future age is not to be approached with fear and trepidation, but with joy, peace and happiness" (Hartin 1999, 54). It must be made clear that for James eschatology is not the focus. He is interested in the day-to-day practical living of the community. The fact that the day of the Lord is near serves as a motivation to be even more observant of the correct behaviour in order to be found perfect when the *parousia* takes place. The emphasis on eschatology serves as the framework for his message; it is not the main thrust of his argument. However, this will also assist us when we look at James' soteriology.

3.4. *Unifying Theme?*

Ever since Dibelius' (1975, 3–11) severe indictment of James as having no theology or unifying theme, interpretations of James have seen this as a problem. This has led them to view James as a book with a loose collection of virtually unrelated themes. This view also strengthens the assumption that James does not present theological arguments and that the advice given is merely unrelated practical and moral injunctions, eclectically chosen. This has resulted in the many diverse structures of James adopted by commentators on the book.

Yet, a search for some kind of unifying theme which could give meaning to the diverse admonitions and sayings has continued. Johnson (1996, 140) finds a unifying theme in Jas 4:4: "Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?" Others have found a unifying theme in the saying that James is a midrash (e.g. Wall 1997), and others have opted for "The Christian Life" (e.g. Adamson 1979).

Hartin (1999, 10) finds a unifying theme in James in the call to perfection. He argues that the concept of perfection, as found in the frequent use of the adjective τέλειος throughout the book is a unifying theme that would give meaning to the diverse topics addressed in the letter. Hartin (1999, 10) explains that "this concept permeates the paranetical advise of the letter and comes close to the present day understanding of integrity." For him the concept of perfection dominates the thoughts of James to such an extent that "the thought of this letter" can be captured by the word "integrity".

Hartin (1999, 17–39) then continues to show how the concept of perfection functioned in the ancient world in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Septuagint and the New Testament. From his expose it is clear that the concept of perfection was indeed widespread in the ancient world. Hartin (1999, 38) concludes that the notion of perfection "in the world of the Septuagint gave expression to the Biblical idea of wholeness and completeness that included an unconditional relationship between God and God's people. That relationship was demonstrated above all in a life led in obedience to the Torah."

He continues to say that the New Testament use of this word builds on the Jewish understanding of the concept, but that each New Testament writer expresses this in his or her own unique way. Hartin (1999, 60–91) argues that for James this concept of perfection is crucial and that the whole letter should be interpreted with this in mind. There is a call to *perfection though enduring trials* (1:2–4, 12–15; 5:7–11). Perfection, wholeness, completeness comes when trails are successfully and patiently endured (1:4; 5:7–11). "One strive for completeness or wholeness of faith that finds expression in a relationship with God and with one another . . . In this way the ethical concept of perfection lays the foundation for the moral instruction of the entire writing" (Hartin 1999, 65). In James *wisdom and perfection* are intrinsically linked (1:5–8, 17; 3:13–18; 4:1–10). The gift of wisdom is the one crucial ingredient that would lead to a life of perfection. "Wisdom is the context for the attaining of perfection . . . The wise are indeed

"the perfect" because they acknowledge their exclusive relationship with God and allow that relationship to influence all their actions" (Hartin 1999, 67).

Perfection is also intrinsically connected with the law. The law is significant in the community of James (1:25; 2:8–12; 4:11–12), because it gives concrete guidelines on how to live in a manner that would set them apart as a community from the outside world, and so maintain their identity and their quest to live a life of perfection. Nowhere is it clearly stated which law is meant, but in the light of the Jewish nature of wisdom, it is probably the Torah. Wall (1997, 61) says: "Especially important to James is the social role of the law, which draws moral boundaries around the faith community to keep it pure from outside contaminants (1:27). The Biblical Torah also provides the community's social boundaries to facilitate acts of mercy towards the poor and powerless."

The importance of this can hardly be overestimated. James encapsulates the thrust of the law in 2:8: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself," which is a direct quote from Lev 19:18. This "love" gives concrete expression to the law. Hartin (1999, 89) concludes: "faith perfected through works is a phrase that summarizes well the message of James. Faith comes to completion through one's actions. For James, advice regarding practical wisdom is directed by the aim of putting faith into action." And through this perfection of wholeness being achieved and realized, a complete dedication to God is given concrete expression in obedience to the law. The community of James is thus encouraged to attain perfection, because they are the first fruits of God's creatures (1:8), they are God's perfect gift (1:17). They are the reconstituted, unblemished gathering of God's people, the twelve tribes in the diaspora. Because they belong to this group they are called to perfection, even if this involves enduring trials, tribulations and temptations (3:2) even in speaking to others (3:9–10).

In addition, a complete dedication to God is called for; a perfect relationship with God is the aim. A relationship untarnished by other allegiances, or other groups, like the outside world (1:6–8, 27). But this quest for perfection is more than a dedication to God and a theoretical striving for perfection. It must be concretized in everyday life, and here for Jewish Christians the only guideline is the law. The law is the guideline for those members of the twelve tribes, and this sets them apart from all others and gives them a particular identity. Hartin (1999, 92) argues that the death and resurrection of Jesus

does not underpin the ethics of James. "James is distinct in this regard. Like the Sayings Gospel Q, it is not the death and resurrection that provide the driving force for action, but the *parousia*, the coming of the Lord."

4. Aspects of the Soteriology of James

In order to examine the soteriology implicit in the letter of James, it is necessary to look at the type of text we are dealing with, what the main thrust of the argument is, what the overarching theme is, and what community has given rise to this particular letter. We have done some of this in the preceding sections, but it is perhaps necessary to recap what we have found and then look at aspects of James' soteriology.

4.1. *Preliminary Conclusions about James and the Community Reflected in the Letter*

Our exploration of James thus far has revealed a number of aspects that could be determining factors on how this particular social group viewed a concept such as salvation. In all of the above, we are beginning to find clues regarding the community which gave rise to the letter of James; the community whose values and self expression find concrete reflection in the letter.

4.1.1. *Familiarity with Jewish Wisdom Teaching*

Clearly, the community involved was familiar with Jewish wisdom teachings. It seems to reflect a community quite close to Judean Christianity, where wisdom sayings were treasured and utilized to preserve and define the community's identity. The ideas of Wisdom would therefore also play a role in their interpretation of salvation.

4.1.2. *Bent on Preserving a Specific Identity*

The type of wisdom saying, the paranaetic (and if Hartin 1999, 45 is correct) and protreptic nature of the sayings/teaching in the letter world, indicate a community which experiences itself as quite separate from the outside world. In other words, the language used belongs to a community that is conscious of the fact that it and its identity hinges on certain values, and that these find concrete expres-

sion in the community's everyday behaviour. The community is also depicted as a fictive kinship group, the twelve tribes in the diaspora, and as brothers. This would indicate a strong affinity for a Judeo-Christian identity, as they identify well with Jewish concepts. They see themselves as a new Israel.

4.1.3. *Strong Eschatological Expectations*

It is clear that the author and the audience have clear expectations of an imminent *parousia*. The closeness of the *parousia* serves to motivate them to strive for perfection, it helps them endure, and gives meaning to their practical day-to-day living with each other within the group. Salvation is not a far-off concept, it is expected very soon.

4.1.4. *Striving for Perfection*

We agree with Hartin (1999) that a possible overarching theme in James could be that of perfection. Perfection is seen as wholeness, a fulfilling purpose, and as first fruits of God's Kingdom, the twelve tribes should strive for perfection themselves, being the reconstitution of God's people.

Perfection is to be found in establishing a perfect relationship with God. "Submit yourselves to God . . . draw near to God . . . humble yourselves before the Lord . . ." (4:7–10). This implies that an intimate relationship between God and the community is seen as perfection, and rules out relationships with the rest of the world.

Perfection is also obtained by adhering to the law. The perfection of the relationship with God finds concrete expression in day-to-day living in the community. The commands given all have a social implication—perfection in a relationship with God is expressed as being in perfection in a relationship with others in the community, so that the community's survival and identity is guaranteed. The idea of perfection that permeates James' letter is also important for understanding its soteriology.

4.1.5. *Strong Group Dynamic*

James is not a book for individuals; it is a book for members of a group. An extremely strong group-focus regulates behaviour in this group, and the practical advice in the letter is aimed at preserving the group and its identity. Jacobean theology is also group theology and this will inevitably influence its soteriology.

4.2. *Salvation in the Jacobean Community*

Traditionally, what sets James apart from all other writings in the New Testament (especially Paul), is the relationship between faith and deeds. James has been maligned for placing such a high premium on actions, while the dominant paradigm that developed in early Christianity, is that faith brings justification and salvation.

However, if one parts from the inclination to compare James and Paul, and begins to view early Christianity as a movement which evolved not from a homogeneous, but an extremely diverse and pluralistic Jewish matrix, one can begin to appreciate James as a reflection of a unique version of Christianity in the early stages of the Christian movement; one that does not necessarily have to comply with the tenets of other early Christian writings.

As we have indicated, James' aim is not to demonstrate a Christology, theology or even an eschatology. He is more interested in the practical day-to-day life of a community. However, he does refer to some aspects of salvation, albeit it quite enigmatic.

4.2.1. *How Does Salvation Come About?*

In a community steeped in practical wisdom traditions and with a strong focus on perfection, a concept such as "faith" on its own cannot actually exist. There is no doubt that faith is crucial to James. In fact the word πίστις occurs no less than sixteen times in this short letter, and the verb πιστεύω three times. Faith seems to be equally important to James as it is to Paul, and its importance can be judged by the fact that it receives attention in the opening chapter of the letter.

Hartin (1999, 61) argues: "Faith that is tested and brought to perfection is the theme in the opening verses (1:2–4). As such, these verses set the direction for the rest of the letter. This theme of perfecting faith through trials also concludes the letter (5:7–11)." It seems that James assumes that there is faith in the community. He does not exhort the community to faith, but to a practical demonstration of this faith. They already believe, they are in a new relationship with God as the first fruits of His new people, but alas, this is not enough.

Faith plays a crucial role in salvation in James, but it cannot achieve anything on its own. For James, faith is only valid if it is clearly demonstrated in practice, like caring for the poor, perseverance, control of the tongue, obeying the law. For James a dichotomy between faith and works cannot exist. There are no half-measures

for the author of James - a perfect community should be perfect in word *and* deed, it cannot tolerate half measures, and for this community faith without deeds is not a valid option.

James's letter is addressed to a community, a fictive kinship group, a kind of New Israel, and this New Israel already stands in a certain faith relationship with God. They are the reconstituted Israel, already a kind of "first-fruit" of the new creation. The assumption is that there is faith, and although their faith is taken for granted, it is not enough to ensure that this social group can delineate itself over and against "others".

In order to ensure that the new social order, which their belief in Christ has constituted, remains alive and valid, certain patterns of behaviour must emerge and must be adhered to. They must show their faith (allegiance to God) in a very practical way in their everyday lives. This faith in action, based on wisdom, is the hallmark of this community—without it there is no clear indication of a perfect relationship with God and its concomitant reward.

Salvation in James equals perfecting faith through consistent and wise living. This consistent living has three components: they ought to live consistently with a view to obtaining perfection/wholeness in difficult and trying times, they ought to live consistently in terms of relationship with God, and they ought to live consistently in terms of a relationship with others in their community.

Salvation comes about by achieving perfection. To many of us the term "perfection" falls strange upon the ear—we do not view "perfection" in a very positive light, nor do we see it as a possibility. Perhaps another good explanation of τέλειος could be wholeness, or completeness.

However, we must remember that in the mindset of antiquity there was no middle ground. It was either black or white, and we see it all throughout the Letter of James as well. The community is called to live in such a way that shows clearly where it stands and where its allegiance lies. Although not much is made of any opposition to God (the devil is mentioned in 5:7 in relation to temptation, not as a formal force in opposition to God), it is mentioned that allegiance to the "world" is enmity to God. One cannot serve or be loyal to God, and at the same time show any form of sympathy for any other cause. Deeds must affirm the new social order that came about by faith. If this does not happen, it means just one thing for James—enmity to God. No one in the community can be "neutral".

So, for James salvation comes about when faith is complemented by works. Faith alone is worth nothing, because that has been the experience of the prior "Israel" (3:20–24), where Abraham's faith and works is held up as an example of faith that was complemented by works. If he were not obedient, his great faith would have meant nothing. As the father of all believers, he had to complement his faith by deeds, and so the new Israel, the new faith community, has to complement/perfect their faith by deeds.

This call to perfect their faith through deeds is so strong because the consequences of not adhering to this call would not only displease God, but would be a threat to the community itself. The majority of the admonitions in James have to do with interpersonal relationships. It regulates life in the community and sets up boundaries for this social group. If one wants to remain part of this specific community, certain "community rules" must be stringently observed. If it is not visible, it means just one thing—the constituent ingredient of the group's existence, namely faith, is absent. The argument is: "How can one have faith, but it is not visible in interaction with other members of the community?" Faith without deeds is dead. And faith is the *sine qua non* for the existence of the community—no faith, no deeds; no deeds, no faith.

It is also noteworthy that the practical wisdom advice given here with regard to others is specific only to members of the community. The majority of commentators on James view James' instructions as applicable to all and sundry, as that is the way we perceive moral conduct; it must apply to all people at all times. But James is not a letter written from a modern perspective for a general audience who live in a world where one belongs to many social groupings at the same time. To read James in this way would be totally anachronistic. James is concerned with the social formation and preservation of a specific group of which he is a (leading) member. His admonitions are aimed at this specific group and its members' interpersonal relationships alone, and not at regulating this group's existence in a wider world.

The outside world is only mentioned with regard to a relationship with God, and this clearly has religious overtones: friendship with the outside world would be equal to enmity with God; and can only mean disloyalty towards God. In other words, meddling with other gods. Again, it is the strong ancient Mediterranean concept of allegiance to only one group at a time that comes into play—loyalty

must be absolute at all times. There are no other instructions regarding those outside the community in James; all the commandments apply to those inside the community. *Salvation for James is a corporate and public expression of faith within the Jacobean community*, and nothing else.

All of this takes place in a community with a very strong eschatological expectation. Because the end is so near, perseverance makes so much sense; it is actually a wise thing to do and those who do not see this are exhorted to pray for wisdom in this regard. Ultimate salvation is imminent, and only those who have perfected their faith through deeds will be part of that glorious dispensation. The members of the community who are already the "first fruits" created/begotten by God, are in some ways already part of this new age to come. They have been reborn spiritually; they are the New Israel, they are the new twelve tribes, the eschatological community of God and the church. But their faith must be perfected by deeds in the time they await the final judgement.

4.2.2. *If Not Saved, Then What?*

There are no devils or demons or false teachers to be fought off in James. The "devil" is only mentioned in relation to temptation, and is not seen as an opponent to God in the way it is developed in the rest of the New Testament. "Demons" are mentioned in 2:19, but in the context of also believing that God exists, and not as opponents to God.

Faith without demonstration is useless according to James, and for those in the community who live inconsistent lives, lives that demonstrate an incomplete commitment to the community, there can be no salvation. James regards "sin" as living inconsistently, being double minded (1:8), practicing immorality (1:19–20), confessing faith and having no deeds (1:23), not guarding their tongues (1:26), neglecting orphans and widows, (1:27), being polluted by the world (1:27), showing favouritism (2:1).

Just as the community will become perfect by following the road of wisdom and James' exhortations, so the wicked will be judged, not by their confessions and thoughts but by their deeds. Salvation for James comes through deeds, and condemnation is also based on deeds.

4.2.3. *Saved for What and from What?*

For James, salvation is as concrete as the way it is achieved. Nowhere does he expand on what exactly is envisioned for the faithful, that

is, the ones who reach perfection when the Day of Judgment has come. It seems that knowledge of the exact content of the "age to come", and what exactly can be expected in eternity, is assumed. There is no need for him to expand on this.

In any case, the letter is a paraenesis, where exhortations are made based on shared knowledge. The aim of the letter is not to explain eternity, but to encourage the faith community adjust its behaviour in order to be sure of attaining the "crown of life". In dealing with the rewards the faithful can expect, he mentions receiving something from God (1:8), receiving the crown of life (1:12), judgment (2:12; 3:1), inheriting the kingdom He has promised (2:5), and a lawgiver that saves and destroys (4:12).

It is clear that James is a part of the tradition that there is a just reward awaiting those who persevere and attain perfection in their faith through deeds. But exactly what this eternal reward will be, he does not expound upon. It is assumed that the community, however, does know, and merely needs to be reminded that prudent and wise living will make it possible for the faithful to receive their eternal reward.

As "first fruits" there is clearly the expectation of a new creation, a new dispensation where members of this community will live in a relationship with God that is mirrored in their relationship with Him in the community in this time. A final judgment is clearly expected and those who refuse to complement their faith with works/deeds, and continue to live a life where there is no tangible proof of their faith or who have not remained loyal to either God or the community, will be judged severely. James mentions not receiving anything from God (1:8), sin leading to death (1:15), conviction by the law (2:9), hell (3:6), a lawgiver that saves and destroys (4:11), misery (5:3), corrosion and eating flesh like fire (5:3), and a day of slaughter (5:5).

Again, there is no need for James to be specific. In terms of punishment, and the content of the damnation of those who are found wanting, the community already knows this; he is just reminding them of it. Faith perfected through deeds is the only way to salvation; neither faith alone nor deeds alone can have the desired effect.

5. Conclusion

The early Christian community which produced James, and for which the letter of James was produced, has a unique interpretation of salvation. It exhibits traits that are quite close to the earliest Christian tradition and its self-understanding as the first fruit of a New Israel strongly influences its theology.

It is representative of a community aligned with Palestinian Christianity which does not have the strong "faith alone" tradition of the later Pauline dominated Christianity. It is not as if faith is denigrated, but for its members, coming from a strong Jewish wisdom tradition in which perfection/wholeness/completeness is important, it is quite understandable that practical wisdom and practical every day-to-day living will receive the highest priority.

Linked to ancient Mediterranean concepts of absolute adherence to the group or kinship group, this community demanded absolute loyalty. And this loyalty must be publicly and corporately displayed. Loyalty to God is displayed in the way in which the members persevere and the way in which they act towards others in the community. Not only is the community's existence ensured and strengthened by this boundary-affirming activity, but ultimate salvation is also ensured.

The community understood itself to be living in the last days, and that makes striving for the perfection that God and the community demanded so much more meaningful. The only way salvation could be ensured in this community was to make their faith perfect through their deeds. In James we have a very practical, but uncompromising, view of salvation: there is no middle ground. If faith is not accompanied by concrete wise living, no one will be saved.

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CHAPTER THREE

METAPHORS IN THE SOTERIOLOGY IN 1 PETER: IDENTIFYING AND INTERPRETING THE SALVIFIC IMAGERIES

Fika J. Janse van Rensburg
North-West University

1. Introduction

The soteriology of 1 Peter has, to a large extend, been neglected. No monograph on soteriology in 1 Peter could be located—only scattered and sporadic remarks in commentaries and in articles. This neglect is evidenced by the survey of the theology of 1 Peter by De Villiers (1993, 157–170). Soteriology is not included as a separate theme in this survey.[1]

In the introductions of some commentaries on 1 Peter a few pages are set aside for a synoptic discussion of soteriology, for example, Michaels (1988, lxx–lxxiv). However, on soteriology in general Martin (1992, 141) makes the important observation that the ontological statements in 1 Peter are almost exclusively expressed through similes and metaphors.

There is a need for a systematic interpretation of soteriology in 1 Peter. This paper, endeavouring to identify and interpret the salvific metaphors, is a first step in this direction.

Martin (1992) has done much work on the metaphors in 1 Peter. He (1992, 144, 148) views two conceptions of the Diaspora as the controlling metaphor in 1 Peter. The first is the conception as arising from the notion that the Diaspora is only temporary and will end with the return of the Jewish people to their homeland (Martin 1992, 150). The second is the conception of the Diaspora as the

[1] The different themes covered by De Villiers (1993) are: "Suffering, future expectation and joy" (pp. 157–161), "Christology" (pp. 162–167), "The church" (pp. 167–168) and "The Christian way of life" (pp. 168–170).

danger of assimilation to the pagan environment and the consequent defection from the Jewish faith (Martin 1992, 156).

He (1992, 160–161) distinguishes three "metaphor clusters" in 1 Peter, announced in the prescript (1:1) (ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς). The first imagery is built around the image of the elect people of God and contains metaphors pertaining to the house of God (1:14–2:10). The second imagery is composed of metaphors that group around the notion of strangers and aliens (2:11–3:12). The third imagery is determined by the concept of the Diaspora as a place of suffering (3:13–5:11). He (1992, 161) views all three these metaphor clusters as related through the overarching and controlling metaphor of the Diaspora.

Although much can be said for the approach of Martin, the Diaspora metaphor in itself is, to my mind, not salvific. It is more about the consequences of the ontological status of the readers, and does not focus on the point of transition from being unsaved to being saved. An own matrix of the salvific metaphors in 1 Peter therefore needs to be drawn up.

2. Methodological Considerations

2.1. *Soteriology*

Soteriology is about the salvation, the point of transition from being lost to being saved. Soteriology is in this way delimited from morality, ecclesiology and Christology. This understanding of soteriology as the point of transition from being lost to being saved is the guiding principle in the identification and interpretation of the salvific metaphors in 1 Peter.[2] The approach is to approximate a clear distinction

[2] Marrow (1990, 278) distinguishes two theories of redemption: along the ransom-sacrifice axis, and along the later satisfaction-merit axis. The previous was the basis for the development of soteriology up to the Middle Ages. It was in the Middle Ages that the two further categories "satisfaction" and "merit" came into use (Marrow 1990, 271). Marrow (1990, 276) also distinguishes the soteriological vocabulary of the New Testament as (amongst others) forgiveness (ἄφεσῖς), reconciliation (καταλλαγή), justification (δικαιοσύνη and its cognates), sanctification (ἁγιωσύνη), purification (καθαρισμός). This vocabulary, he says, is used to express the effect of the death on the cross "for us" rather than to describe the process whereby this effect is achieved. This brings him (1990, 277) to the conclusion that an analysis of the soteriological terms of the New Testament should begin with the understanding of the end achieved rather than with the mode of its achievement.

between what interpreters later made of the soteriology in 1 Peter, and what the letter itself presents. It is an attempt to put the present day reader of 1 Peter in the shoes of the first readers, and describe the soteriology in 1 Peter from this stance: what is it that they were saved from (the *ab quo* of the being saved), and what was their state after having been saved (the *ad quem*).[3]

2.2. *Metaphor*

Much has been written about metaphors. A survey of the research reminds one of the truth of what Aristotle (*Poet.*, 1459) wrote about metaphors: "The greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learned from others. It is the mark of genius."[4] It seems to become even more of a task when interpreting (and not generating) metaphors, especially since we are working with texts 2000 years old and older.[5] But out of this potential chaos, let us try to find our way.

2.2.1. *Towards a Definition of Metaphor*

Metaphor is a figure of comparison, together with simile and parable (an extended simile) and allegory (an extended metaphor) (Kaiser & Silva 1996, 93).[6] Comparison is one of the most valuable sources

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He (1990, 278–280) furthermore suggests four principles for the interpretation of the soteriological statements in the New Testament: (1) Terms like "ransom", "redemption", "sacrifice" are to be taken metaphorically. (2) If the ground in a metaphor is not mentioned explicitly, it must be approximated. (3) Even in the terms that speak not so much of the process itself, as of its result, the same principle holds true. (4) In instances of seemingly excessive realism (e.g. speaking of Christ as "having become a curse for us" [Gal 3:13]) the text itself directs the attention to the outcome attained.

[3] Marrow (1990, 280) suggests that the best way of approaching the soteriological terminology of the New Testament is to start with the outcome, i.e. with the result of the death on the cross, and to work backwards to the terminology employed in speaking of it. A problem of this approach is the risk of dogmatising, instead of really doing exegesis.

[4] πολὺ δὲ μέγιστον τὸ μεταφορικὸν εἶναι. μόνον γὰρ τοῦτο οὔτε παρ᾽ ἄλλου ἔστι λαβεῖν εὐφυΐας τε σημεῖόν ἐστιν (Aristotle, *Poet.*, 1459).

[5] To put it like Caird (1980, 145): "We do not live in the world of the Old or New Testament, we are unacquainted with what to the contemporaries of Isaiah or Paul were familiar, everyday objects or experiences, and it is therefore easy for us to miss the affinities which imposed themselves on the inward eye of the biblical writers." J. W. Goethe has coined this truth: "Wer den Dichter will verstehen, muss in Dichters Lande gehen" (Who wants to understand a poet, must go to the poet's country).

[6] Longman (1987, 130) uses more or less the same categories, saying that many

of knowledge, the main road leading from the known to the unknown (Caird 1980, 144). But metaphor has even greater potential power: it can orientate and re-orientate readers in accordance with an author's perspective (Mouton 2002, 40).

The view of Nida & Taber (1974, 203) that a metaphor is "a figurative expression used instead of another to make an implicit comparison between the items referred to by the two expressions, often based on supplementary components," has been proven to be over simplified.[7] The fact that it is an image based on similarity within difference (Longman 1987, 130) is not taken into consideration. The metaphor presupposes a well-established use of language (the "literal" meaning) and then extends this use in a way that is novel or logically odd (Thiselton 1977, 94). Metaphor relies on a literal meaning, and at the same time it subverts and extends this literal meaning through transformation (Mouton 2002, 41).

For the purposes of this paper I concur with Thiselton (1977, 94–95) about the aim of metaphor, but add a third to his two:

- Firstly, it sets up a tension that is intended to provoke the hearer into some reaction.
- Secondly, it provides a model, or picture, or frame of reference, according to which the hearer now "sees" the point in question in a new way.[8]
- To this I add a third use, hinted on by Gunton (1989, 65): to verbalize something that cannot be described adequately in everyday empirical terms.

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different types of images are based on the principle of similarity. He (1987, 130) views metaphor as the most common, with simile as its explicit correlate. He (1987, 130) adds: "Indeed it might plausibly be argued that all of the others are really a subtype of the master figure, simile." Van der Watt (2000, 6), using Miller (1971, 127), provides a functional description of metaphor: two lexical items of disparate meanings are linked on the basis of some form of comparison, with specific semantic implications.

[7] Kaiser & Silva (1996, 93, 285) tend towards the same over simplification. Metaphor is viewed as a figure of speech where a word uses an unexpressed comparison to indicate what it is similar to. The comparison is unexpressed or merely implied. The idea is carried over from one element to another without directly saying that one is "like" or "as" the other.

[8] Thiselton (1977, 95) states that one can say of a metaphor what F. Waismann says of poetry: "Its mission is to break through the wall of conventional values that encloses us, to startle us into seeing the world through fresh eyes."

Metaphors are thus ways of describing realistically that which can only be described in the indirect manner of this kind of language. Metaphorical *meaning* depends upon a literal, conventional base as a point of contact (cf. God as *father* and *steward*; Jesus as *saviour* and *lord*; the Spirit as *seal* and *deposit*), but through being applied to a new field, another matrix of thought, new meaning is created (Mouton 2002, 41).

2.2.2. *Constituents of a Metaphor*

Following the proposal by Van der Watt (2000, 18) the terms "focus" (the word which is the reason why the reader feels that the sentence can not be understood literally) and "frame" (the rest of the sentence) are used where verbs are metaphorized.

Where the metaphorized sentence consists of nomina, the terms "tenor" (a word from the literal frame) and "vehicle" (the figurative or metaphorical used word) are used.

De Waard (1974, 109–110) also proposes a usable method to analyse metaphors. A metaphor is viewed as having three constituents (De Waard 1974, 109): object, ground and image.[9]

It is necessary to distinguish between full and abbreviated metaphors (De Waard 1974, 109).[10] While full metaphors explicitly exhibit all three the constituents, object, ground and image, in abbreviated metaphors one or two of the constituents remain implicit.[11]

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[9] Kaiser & Silva (1996, 93–94) also distinguish these three parts to every metaphor, using own terminology: (1) the subject or item being illustrated by the image, (2) the image of the direct or implied comparison, and (3) the point of the direct or implied comparison or similarity. Martin (1992, 147), agreeing with Weinrich (1976, 276–341), distinguishes between two essential aspects of a metaphor: the image-contributor and the image-receptor.

[10] This distinction has some analogy with Dagut's (1971, 96–146) distinction between "complex" and "simplex" metaphors, and also with Miller's (1971, 128–134) distinction between surface metaphor (a basic metaphor where both the tenor and vehicle are given), suspended metaphor (the tenor is mentioned later in the context). Miller also distinguishes composite metaphor (when several metaphors in a larger context are linked or function together).

[11] Normally it is the ground that is implicit, sometimes the object of the comparison remains implicit, and occasionally neither the object nor the ground is explicitly stated. In the sentence: "the tongue [object] is a fire [image]" (James 3:6), the ground is implicit. This ground could be: "dangerous". In the sentence: "go tell the fox [image]" (Luke 13:32), the implicit object is "Herod", and the implicit ground could be "cunning".

2.2.3. *Imagery*

Imagery is understood as the total and coherent account (or mental picture) of objects, with corresponding actions and relations, associatively (and thematically) belonging together (Van der Watt 2000, 18).[12] An imagery is a metaphor system (Caird 1980, 155), i.e. a group of metaphors linked together by their common origin in a single area of human observation, experience or activity. Typically such imagery has generated its own peculiar sub-language or jargon. Any metaphor drawn from the specific imagery invites embellishment by the addition of other metaphors from the imagery.

2.2.4. *Dead Metaphors*

A metaphor reaches its aim only when it is genuinely "alive" (Thiselton 1977, 95). Most metaphors very soon become dead metaphors. They become 'frozen' (Martin 1992, 141), having lost their metaphorical aspect and becoming perceived as literal.[13] To establish whether a metaphor is "alive" or "dead" and to define the degree in which a metaphor has lost its vitality, is a crucial difficulty (De Waard 1974, 113).[14] One of the reasons for this difficulty is the fact that the interpretation is forced to depend on, in many cases, doubtful dictionary codifications as well as on the analysis of the diachronic process of metaphors as far as the available data in literature permits such an analysis.

Furthermore, there is no exact boarder line between metaphor and non-metaphor. Rather, one should think in terms of a continuous scale, passing through "dead" metaphor and merely figurative language such as metonymy or synecdoche (Thiselton 1977, 95). The

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[12] Examples of imagery are sheep farming, family life, healing, commerce, law, warfare, weather, love, health, nature, sport.

[13] Mouton (2002, 42) argues an important implication of the phenomenon of a metaphor becoming "dead". When a metaphor has become commonplace, and is literalized, the problem is that similarity has become identity, and that the tension which is so critical in metaphor, has been lost. This danger is ever present in religious metaphors, because religious images—through tradition and ritual—seldom change, and easily become accepted as ordinary language.

[14] De Waard (1974, 113) argues convincingly that the identification of dead metaphors is important for translation, since dead metaphors should not be revived and thus "over-translated". Dagut (1971, 117, 139) warns against "hypnotization" with regard to metaphors. This happens, he argues, when a metaphor that is actually dead in the source text, has much vitality for an interpreter because the interpreter has not been acquainted to it. In translation work this may result in metaphors being formally transferred and forced upon the receptor language.

borderline between dead metaphor and idiom is fluid (De Waard 1974, 116).

2.2.5. *The Interpretation and Translation of Metaphor*

The reader intuitively and meditatively must consider the similarity between the object and the image by means of a process of elimination (Longman 1987, 130). The process will result in some vagueness of interpretation, which is an inherent characteristic of metaphoric language. Thiselton (1977, 95) points out that the interpreter has to steer a very careful path between evaporating the force of a metaphor by total explication, and leaving the meaning open to doubt. If a metaphor is already dead even in the New Testament, no harm is done by erring on the side of clarity. But it is a different matter if the metaphor is a live one. A metaphor is to make hearers think for themselves, often by means of some deliberate ambiguity. It gives us something as a model for something else without making explicit in exactly what way it is supposed to be a model. If metaphor is eliminated or turned into simile this entire dimension is lost (Thiselton 1977, 95).[15]

2.2.6. *Conclusion on Metaphor*

Metaphor is viewed as two lexical items of disparate meanings linked on the basis of some form of comparison, with specific semantic implications. It has the power to orientate and reorientate readers in accordance with an author's perspective. A metaphor thus presupposes a well-established use of language (the "literal" meaning) and then extends this use in a way that is novel or logically odd.

2.3. *The Old Testament in the New*

The three categories of Old Testament "references" distinguished by S. Moyise (2000, 18–19) are used in this study. They are quotations,[16]

[15] De Waard (1974, 111), after stating that metaphors are largely based on supplementary or conventional components, argues persuasively that it will only rarely happen that another language will attach these very same components to one word. He is right that very frequently the translation of metaphors as such, with the exception of loan metaphors, appears to be impossible.

[16] *Quotations* involve a self-conscious break from the author's style to introduce words from another context. There is frequently an introductory formula or some grammatical clue (e.g. ὅτι).

allusions[17] and echoes.[18] I, however, add sub-categories to Moyise's first and second category, on the basis of work done by Schutter (1989, 35–36). The taxonomy used in identifying and interpreting the First Peter salvific metaphors from or reminiscent of the Old Testament, can therefore be summarised as follows:

1. *Quotation*
   - 1.1 Explicit quotation[19]
   - 1.2 Implicit quotation[20]
2. *Allusions*
   - 2.1 Explicit allusion[21]
   - 2.2 Implicit allusion[22]
   - 2.3 Incipient allusion[23]
   - 2.4 Iterative allusion[24]
3. *Echoes*

When an author alludes to another text, he establishes a dynamic interaction between his own voice and the voices of the past. The four types of dynamic interaction between texts developed by Greene (1982) for poetry have been successfully applied by Moyise (1995, 118–120) on the dynamic interaction between the Old and New Testament. It is heuristically much more powerful than the traditional categories (such as prophecy and fulfilment, typology or *midrash*). These four categories are reproductive, eclectic, heuristic, and dialectic.[25]

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[17] *Allusions* are usually woven into the text rather than being "quoted", and are often less precise in terms of wording. If a subtext is well known, the slightest of allusions is sometimes sufficient to evoke its presence.

[18] *Echoes* are faint traces of texts that are probably quite unconscious but emerge from minds soaked in the scriptural heritage of Israel.

[19] "An explicit quotation is always introduced by a formula" (Schutter 1989, 35).

[20] "An implicit quotation reproduces a text *in extenso*, such that it might have been introduced by a formula" (Schutter 1989, 35).

[21] "An explicit allusion either makes a pointed reference to an OT pericope, or reproduces a sufficient quantity of text so as to leave one OT locus the obvious point of origin" (Schutter 1989, 36).

[22] "An implicit allusion does not reproduce sufficient text to make one such locus obvious, only likely when more than one possible locus exists, but its basis in Scripture remains clear" (Schutter 1989, 36).

[23] "An incipient allusion refers to an OT pericope but depends for its recognition upon an exegetical tradition associated with that pericope" (Schutter 1989, 36).

[24] "An iterative allusion resumes or anticipates part of an OT text cited elsewhere by the author, and often it would have gone undetected without such a favourable literary context" (Schutter 1989, 36).

[25] Moyise (1995, 118–120): *Reproductive imitation* is when the author perceives the

The caution noted by Van der Watt (2000, 151) against a premature inter-textual reading of a metaphor is appropriate. The primary context of the interpretation is supplied by the literary context as such, and not by the Old Testament. Since a metaphor is semantically developed and specified by its context, an interpretation in context is made before inter-textual considerations are added.

2.4. *Socio-historical Ecology of Metaphors*[26]

One can only start understanding the power of the concepts in a text upon determining the meaning of those concepts in the period it was written (Van Unnik 1980, 203). It is therefore important to construct the probable socio-historic context of 1 Peter, thus establishing the socio-historical ecology of its salvific metaphors.[27] The method utilised for the construction of the context is the socio-historic approach, as explicated in a 2000 publication (Van Rensburg 2000, 564–582).[28]

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subtext as coming from a golden age that is now over. All that can be done is to rewrite the subtext as though no other form of celebration could be worthy of its dignity. It is as if the author is afraid of his or her own voice and prefers the safety of the past. *Eclectic imitation* is where the author draws on a wide range of sources, seemingly at random, without laying special emphasis on any one of them. It suggests that a New Testament author more often chose a text for its "evocative power" rather than its specific theological or doctrinal content. *Heuristic imitation* is when the new work seeks to define itself through a rewriting or modernising of a past text. It advertises itself not simply as one possible imitation of the old but as its true successor. This comes about only through a double process of discovery: on the one hand through a tentative and experimental groping for the subtext in its specificity and otherness, and on the other hand through a groping for the present author's own appropriate voice and idiom. *Dialectical imitation* is when the text engages the precursor in such a way that neither is able to absorb or master the other. The effect is to create a kind of struggle between texts and between eras that cannot easily be resolved.

[26] The socio-historical ecology of metaphors refers to the totality and interrelatedness of the social-reality of the ancient Mediterranean world (Van der Watt 2000, 139).

[27] Van der Watt (2000, 139) coins the socio-historical ecology of metaphors as the totality and interrelatedness of the social-reality of the ancient Mediterranean world.

[28] This approach places me among the researchers about whom Garrett (1982, 90), after describing the extreme poles of the socio-historic and socio-scientific approaches, says: ". . . many have held that the most promising approach is one that continues to employ old methods and questions, but that is also informed by the questions social scientists ask and the models they employ."

3. The Argument of 1 Peter[29]

The basic salvific statement in 1 Peter is that the Father has made the readers his children (πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ . . . ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς) (1:3–12). This statement about their *new birth* then becomes the basis for four inferences that are given as four exhortations:

- 1:13–25: Set your hope fully on the grace, and therefore be holy
- 2:1–10: The obligation of a "new" child of God to grow individually as well as together with fellow-believers
- 2:11–4:19: Code of conduct for πάροικοι and παρεπίδημοι
  - 2:11–12: The basic exhortation
  - 2:13–17: Relationship with political authorities
  - 2:18–25: Relationship with employers
  - 3: 1–7: Relationship with the marriage partner
  - 3: 8–12: Relationship with neighbours in general
  - 3:13–4:19: Attitude towards and reaction to unjust sufferings
- 5:1–11: Code of conduct within the church

4. Identifying and Interpreting the Salvific Metaphors in 1 Peter

Using the definition given of soteriology (that soteriology is about the point of transition from being lost to being saved, cf. 2.1 above), and the observations about metaphor (cf. point 2.2 above) the text of 1 Peter can now be screened. This screening reveals three imageries of salvific metaphor, namely:

- The saved as family, with God as father.
- The saved as a flock of sheep having been returned to Christ as (chief) shepherd.
- The saved as having been healed by Christ's wound.

Two more imageries have all the makings of being salvific, but closer scrutiny shows that they are not, namely: The imagery of the saved

[29] The argument of 1 Peter as proposed by Van Rensburg (1992, 26–41) is taken as frame of reference in the identification and interpretation of the metaphors.

as (temple) building with Christ as (corner) stone (1 Pet 2:4–9),[30] and the saved as heirs (1:3; 3:7).[31]

The different salvific metaphors can now be categorized into the three imageries, and interpreted. The interpretation aims at establishing the *ab quo* and the *ad quem* of each of the identified metaphors.

4.1. *The Saved As Family, with God As Father*[32]

4.1.1. *The Saved As Children of a Father Who Has Begotten Them, Who Have Tasted the Milk he Provides*[33]

<**1:3**> . . . ὁ θεὸς καὶ *πατὴρ* τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος *ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς* εἰς ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν δι᾽ ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐκ νεκρῶν	[3]Praise be to the God and *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy *he has given us new birth* into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
<**1:17**> Καὶ εἰ *πατέρα* ἐπικαλεῖσθε τὸν ἀπροσωπολήμπτως κρίνοντα κατὰ τὸ ἑκάστου ἔργον, ἐν φόβῳ τὸν τῆς παροικίας ὑμῶν χρόνον ἀναστράφητε	[17]Since you call on a *Father* who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

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[30] The imagery of the saved as (temple) building with Christ as (corner) stone (1 Pet 2:4–9) focuses on the temple building (2:5: οἶκος) that has Christ the living stone (2:4: λίθον ζῶντα) as cornerstone (2:6: λίθον ἀκρογωνιαῖον) and capstone (2:7: κεφαλὴν γωνίας). The believers are the living stones of this spiritual house (2:5: λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε οἶκος πνευματικὸς). The surprising elements of this imagery are: (1) The stones are "living", both Christ as corner stone and capstone, as well as the believers as the building blocks; (2) The house is not an ordinary house, but a "spiritual house"; (3) This temple does not *have* a priesthood, but in itself it Ìs a priesthood. The *ab quo* and the *ad quem* this imagery signals is that earlier they were without temple and priests. Now much more is given to them: they themselves actually become the temple of God, fulfilling their task as royal priesthood. The readers are therefore not exhorted to come to the Living Stone *to be saved* (which would have made it salvific). They are already like living stones, because of their relationship with the Living Stone! This pericope serves to persuade the *already saved* to take up their *common responsibility* to "offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God" (2:5), and to be a "royal priesthood" (2:9).

[31] The imagery of the saved as heirs who have been born into an inheritance (1:3: εἰς κληρονομίαν) and are heirs of the gracious gift of life (3:7: συγκληρονόμοις χάριτος ζωῆς) is not about *becoming saved*, but explicates *the result* of having been saved: the fact that they now are heirs.

[32] Cf. Van der Watt (2000, 400–406) for a discussion of the metaphorical development of the family imagery.

[33] Key words: πατήρ, ἀναγεννάω, βρέφη, γεύομαι.

<**1:23**> *ἀναγεγεννημένοι* οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς ἀλλὰ ἀφθάρτου διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος.	[23]For you *have been born again*, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.
<**2:2**> ὡς *ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη* τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηθῆτε εἰς σωτηρίαν, <**2:3**> εἰ *ἐγεύσασθε* ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος	[2]Like *newborn babies*, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, [3] now that *you have tasted* that the Lord is good.

This imagery focuses on a father who gives new birth (1:3: πατὴρ ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς; 1:23: ἀναγεγεννημένοι). Two surprising elements are present: it is a father (and not a mother) giving the new birth, and it is explicitly stressed that it is not a natural birth, but a "new" birth; they are being born "again". This metaphor is developed in 2:2: just like happens after a natural birth, the newborn believers are babies (ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη). But then, in 2:3, yet again a surprising element: the newborn babies receive *colostrum* (the first secretion from the mammary glands occurring after giving birth) that they taste (ἐγεύσασθε), but from their father. In 1:17, it is not the birth that is in focus, but the result of having been born into a family: such a person is obliged to have "reverent fear" for the father of the family (πατέρα ἐπικαλεῖσθε τὸν). The use of the metaphor in 1:17 is therefore not salvific.

In this imagery in 2:3 there is a possible reference to Psalm 34:8. Psalm 34:8 reads as follows:

LXX 33:9	34:9	34:8
γεύσασθε καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος, μακάριος ἀνήρ, ὃς ἐλπίζει ἐπ᾽ αὐτόν.	טְעֲמוּ֥ וּרְא֑וּ כִּי־ט֖וֹב יְהוָ֣ה אַ֭שְׁרֵי הַגֶּ֣בֶר יֶחֱסֶה־בּֽוֹ׃	*Taste* and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

1 Peter 2:2 is an explicit allusion to Psalm 34:8.[34] In 1 Peter 2:2, Peter exhorts his readers to crave pure spiritual milk like newborn babies. It seems as if Peter has taken the imperative mood from the psalm (γεύσασθε →← טְעֲמוּ), used it in verse 2 (*crave:* ἐπιποθήσατε), and then alludes to the psalm's actual words as the basis for the command (Marshall 1991, 65). In Psalm 34:8, the "taste" exhortation is not used within the family imagery. There is also no hint

[34] So also Schutter (1989, 37).

that it is used with reference to milk. The context of the Psalm is therefore not helpful in interpreting the metaphor in 1 Peter. This dynamic interaction between the 1 Peter and Psalm 34 can be typified as heuristic imitation.

The author does back up his crave-exhortation with the explicit allusion, but at the same time transforms the taste-exhortation by utilizing it within the family imagery of a newborn baby. What the readers have tasted refers to God's initial salvific act: that he has made them his children through new birth and sustained them in their new existence with the *colostrum*. God's other goodness is in his word (pure spiritual milk). The newborn babies need this milk, otherwise they will not grow. And again they will experience its goodness, now no longer as pertaining to their salvation, but to what needs to follow on their salvation: their sanctification.

These considerations pertaining to Psalm 34:8 as an inter-text of 1 Peter 2:3 do not add any new dimensions to the interpretation of the metaphor, "the saved as children begotten by a father, and who have tasted the milk he provides" in 1 Peter.

It is now possible to draw a conclusion on the *ab quo* and the *ad quem* that this imagery (the saved as children of a father who has begotten them, and who have tasted the milk he provides) signals:

- Before the first readers/hearers of 1 Peter became Christians, they were loose individuals, dead in sin. Now they are a family, God having become their father through begetting them.
- Immediately after birth (actually, as part of the birth process) the newborn baby receives *colostrum*, signalling God's gracious goodness in having made them his children just because he wanted to. Two things happen to the newborn babies: they experience the goodness of God's "first" milk (*colostrum*), and this wets the appetite for more milk. All of this results in the newborn baby growing up into a powerful person, and not remaining a weak baby.

4.1.2. *The Saved as Redeemed by God into His Household, with the Precious Blood of Christ*[35]

<**1:18**> εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ φθαρτοῖς, ἀργυρίῳ ἢ χρυσίῳ, *ἐλυτρώθητε* ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ὑμῶν ἀναστροφῆς	[18]For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were *redeemed* from

[35] Key words: ἐλυτρώθητε αἵματι ὡς ἀμνοῦ Χριστοῦ, οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐλεύθεροι, ἐλευθερίαν, θεοῦ δοῦλοι.

πατροπαραδότου <**1:19**> ἀλλὰ τιμίῳ *αἵματι* ὡς ἀμνοῦ ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου *Χριστοῦ*	the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19 but *with the precious blood of Christ*, a lamb without blemish or defect.
<**2:16**> ὡς *ἐλεύθεροι* καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐπικάλυμμα ἔχοντες τῆς κακίας *τὴν ἐλευθερίαν* ἀλλ᾽ ὡς *θεοῦ δοῦλοι.*	[16]Live as *free men*, but do not use your *freedom* as a cover-up for evil; live as *servants of God*.
<**4:17**> ὅτι [ὁ] καιρὸς τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ *τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ*· εἰ δὲ πρῶτον ἀφ᾽ ἡμῶν, τί τὸ τέλος τῶν ἀπειθούντων τῷ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίῳ	[17]For it is time for judgment to begin with *the family of God*; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

This imagery centres on the idea of slaves having been bought and paid for (1:18: ἐλυτρώθητε), and brought under the ownership of their new master (2:16: θεοῦ δοῦλοι) in his household (4:17: τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ). They are free from the old bondage (1:18: ἐλυτρώθητε ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ὑμῶν ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότοὺ 2:16: ἐλεύθεροι), but now have new responsibilities to their new master (2:16: θεοῦ δοῦλοι). The surprising elements of the imagery are: (1) They were redeemed not with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ; (2) They were redeemed not from an earlier owner, but from the empty way of life handed down to them from their forefathers; (3) Although they have been made free persons, they have the obligation to submit to God as their new owner.

In this imagery, in 1:18 there are possible references to Isaiah 52:3, and in 4:17 to Ezekiel 9:6.[36] Therefore, the metaphors in these two verses need to be interpreted.

Isaiah 52:3, as alluded to by 1 Peter 1:18, reads as follows:

ὅτι τάδε λέγει κύριος Δωρεὰν ἐπράθητε καὶ οὐ μετὰ ἀργυρίου λυτρωθήσεσθε.	כִּי־כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה חִנָּם נִמְכַּרְתֶּם וְלֹא בְכֶסֶף תִּגָּאֲלוּ׃	For this is what the LORD says: "You were sold for nothing, and without money you will be redeemed."

[36] Schutter (1989, 38) classifies 1:19 as an "implicit allusion" to Isa 53:7. However, the only 'link' is the single word ὡς ἀμνοῦ →← ὡς ἀμνὸς. This does not even merit "echo"; definitely not implicit allusion.

1 Peter 1:18 contains an implicit allusion to Isaiah 52:3 (so also Schutter 1989, 38). The connection is the concept ἐλυτρώθητε →← λυτρωθήσεσθε →← תִּגָּאֲלוּ, and the idea of being redeemed without money (οὐ φθαρτοῖς, ἀργυρίῳ ἢ χρυσίῳ →← οὐ μετὰ ἀργυρίου →← וְלֹא בְכֶסֶף תִּגָּאֲלוּ). In terms of the four categories of dynamic interaction between the Old and the New Testament, this implicit allusion is eclectic imitation. The author of 1 Peter makes the implicit allusion more for the evocative power of the text than for the theological or doctrinal content.

Although "redemption" is a metaphor drawn from slavery, Caird (1980, 156) may be right that for the author the surface significance of the term is that it belongs to Exodus language. Although the concept of redemption in the ancient world applied to a variety of contexts (Marshall 1991, 54), including the emancipation of slaves from their masters and the release of prisoners of war, 1 Peter's reference to Babylon (5:4) and his labelling of the readers as being in the *diaspora* (1:1) points to the possibility that he wants to call to mind how God set his people free from bondage in Egypt and brought them out to live in freedom in the Promised Land.

These considerations pertaining to Isaiah 52:3 as an inter-text do not add any new dimensions to the interpretation of the redeem-metaphor.

1 Peter 4:17 has an echo to Ezekiel 9:6:[37]

πρεσβύτερον καὶ νεανίσκον καὶ παρθένον καὶ νήπια καὶ γυναῖκας ἀποκτείνατε εἰς ἐξάλειψιν, ἐπὶ δὲ πάντας, ἐφ' οὕς ἐστιν τὸ σημεῖον, μὴ ἐγγίσητε, καὶ *ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων μου ἄρξασθε.* καὶ ἤρξαντο ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, οἳ ἦσαν ἔσω ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ.	זַקֵן בַּחוּר וּבְתוּלָה וְטַף וְנָשִׁים תָּהָרֵגוּ לְמַשְׁחִית וְעָל-כָּל-אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-עָלָיו תָּהָו אַל-תִּגָּשׁוּ וּמִמִּקְדָּשִׁי תָּחֵלּוּ וַיָּחֵלּוּ בָּאֲנָשִׁים הַזְּקֵנִים אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי הַבָּיִת	"Slaughter old men, young men and maidens, women and children, but do not touch anyone who has the mark. *Begin at my sanctuary.*" So they began with the elders who were in front of the temple.

It seems as if the author of 1 Peter quite unconsciously picked up the ἄρξασθε from Ezekiel 9:6 (emerging from a mind soaked in the

[37] Schutter (1989, 37–38) argues that Ezek 9:6 is verbally nearer 1 Pet 4:17 than are Jer 25:29 and Mal 3:1. Although, he acknowledges "there may be insufficient reason to deny the status of explicit allusion to them."

scriptural heritage of Israel. It is, however, clear that he does not have in mind the sanctuary (ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων →← וּמִמִּקְדָּשִׁי), but the household of God (ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ).[38] Of course, 'house of God' could also refer to the sanctuary, but in the context of 1 Peter 4:17 it is clearly not the case.[39] The author of 1 Peter merely echoes Ezekiel 9:6, in a sort of dialectical imitation: the text engages the precursor in such a way that neither is able to absorb or master the other.

These considerations pertaining to Ezekiel 9:6 as an inter-text do not add any new dimensions to the interpretation of the household-metaphor in 1 Peter.

It is now possible to draw a conclusion on the *ab quo* and the *ad quem* that this imagery (the saved as redeemed by God into his household, with the precious blood of Christ) signals:

- The believers previously were the property of some other powerful person, not specified in the metaphor, sold into slavery. God has redeemed them, and now they are free!
- They were slaves to an empty way of life handed down to them from their forefathers, but now they are slaves to God, having been redeemed by God!
- They were worthless and would not fetch a price. However, God values them so much that he paid a precious price: the precious blood of Christ.
- They were homeless; now they have become part and parcel of the household of God!

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[38] Elliott (1981, 270) is of the opinion that the οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ functions as the chief integrative concept of 1 Peter.

[39] The conception and description of the chosen people as a house is prevalent in the Hebrew Scriptures and is frequently used to refer to the people in exile (Ezek 3:4, 17; 37:11; 39:25; 36:19) (Cf. Martin 1992, 164). Goppelt (1978, 311) also acknowledges this. Although he views the οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ as in the first place the temple of the Old Testament passage cited (Ezekiel 9, 6), he says that for the author of 1 Peter it is the community of believers. Marshall (1991, 156), however, does not agree. He sees the church here not so much as God's *family* but rather as his temple, as is the case in 1 Peter 2:1–10. Martin (1992, 165) tries to reconcile the two possible meanings by stating that in 1 Peter the οἶκος belongs to God and therefore qualifies as temple. This is forced, and does not convince.

4.1.3. *The Saved As Being Transformed into the People/Nation of God*[40]

<**2:9**> Ὑμεῖς δὲ *γένος* ἐκλεκτόν, βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα, *ἔθνος* ἅγιον, *λαὸς* εἰς περιποίησιν, ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ φῶς	[9]But you are a chosen *people*, a royal priesthood, a holy *nation*, a *people* belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.
<**2:10**> οἵ ποτε οὐ λαὸς νῦν δὲ *λαὸς* θεοῦ, οἱ οὐκ ἠλεημένοι νῦν δὲ ἐλεηθέντες	[10]Once you were not a people, but now you are the *people* of God.

This imagery focuses on the phenomenon that a king formats a nation (2:9: γένος, ἔθνος; 2:9–10: λαός). The nation exhibits a unity and high level of integration that gives security and a sense of belonging to the members of that nation. The surprising elements of the imagery are: (1) Individuals who are not related to each other, actually become a people, a γένος; and (2) They become a people not out of own motivation, but because God 'chose' them.

In this imagery in 2:9–10 there are possible references to Exodus 19:5–6, Isaiah 43:20–21 and Hosea 1:6–2:1.[41] 1 Peter 2:9 has an explicit allusion to Exodus 19:5–6 (LXX 23:22).

[22]ἐὰν ἀκοῇ ἀκούσητε τῆς ἐμῆς φωνῆς καὶ ποιήσῃς πάντα, ὅσα ἂν ἐντείλωμαί σοι, καὶ φυλάξητε τὴν διαθήκην μου, ἔσεσθέ μοι λαὸς περιούσιος ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν, ἐμὴ γάρ ἐστιν πᾶσα ἡ γῆ, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἔσεσθέ μοι βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα καὶ *ἔθνος ἅγιον*. ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα ἐρεῖς τοῖς υἱοῖς Ισραηλ.	5 וְעַתָּה אִ֣ם־שָׁמֹ֣עַ תִּשְׁמְע֗וּ בְּקֹלִי֙ וּשְׁמַרְתֶּ֣ם אֶת־בְּרִיתִ֔י וְהְיִיתֶ֥ם לִ֛י סְגֻלָּ֥ה מִכָּל־הָעַמִּ֖ים כִּי־לִ֣י כָל־הָאָ֑רֶץ 6 וְאַתֶּ֤ם תִּהְיוּ־לִי֙ מַמְלֶ֣כֶת כֹּהֲנִ֔ים וְג֥וֹי קָד֖וֹשׁ אֵ֑לֶּה הַדְּבָרִ֔ים אֲשֶׁ֥ר תְּדַבֵּ֖ר אֶל־בְּנֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵֽל׃	[5]Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, [6]you will be for me a kingdom of priests and *a holy nation*. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.

[40] Key words: γένος, ἔθνος, λαός.

[41] Schutter (1989, 37) says about 2:9 that it brings together items from different contexts.

This Exodus allusion comes from the passage where Moses is about to receive the Ten Commandments. God makes the preliminary offer to the people of Israel: They can be his people provided they are willing to keep his commandments. Peter's concern is to describe his readers in language, drawn from the Old Testament, which was originally used to depict Israel as the chosen people of God. This dynamic interaction between 1 Peter and Exodus can be typified as heuristic imitation. The author of 1 Peter wants to redefine the readers through a rewriting of the Exodus text.

Here, however—and this differs from the Exodus text—there are no conditions for becoming the holy nation.[42] It is something that God has already done, out of own volition.

We now turn to Isaiah 43:20–21:

[20]εὐλογήσει με τὰ θηρία τοῦ ἀγροῦ, σειρῆνες καὶ θυγατέρες στρουθῶν, ὅτι ἔδωκα ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ὕδωρ καὶ ποταμοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀνύδρῳ ποτίσαι *τὸ γένος μου τὸ ἐκλεκτόν*, [21]λαόν μου, ὃν περιεποιησάμην τὰς ἀρετάς μου διηγεῖσθαι.	תָּכְ׃בּרֵנִי חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה תַּנִּים וּ׃בְנוֹת יָעֲנָה כִּי-נָתַתִּי בַמִּדְבָּר מַיִם נְהָרוֹת בִּישִׁימֹן לְהַשְׁקוֹת עַמִּי *׃בְחִירִי ש* 21 עָם-זוּ יָצַרְתִּי לִי ׃תְּהִלָּתִי יְסַפֵּרוּ ס
[20]The wild animals honour me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the desert and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to *my people, my chosen*, [21] the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.	

1 Peter 2:9 is an explicit allusion to Isaiah 43:20–21.[43] The only difference is that the author of 1 Peter has dropped the *μου*, and the predicative use of *ἐκλεκτόν*[44] has become attributive:

γένος ἐκλεκτόν →← τὸ γένος μου τὸ ἐκλεκτόν →← תְּהִלָּתִי יְסַפֵּרוּ

[42] Marshall (1991, 75) states that the identification of the readers as "holy" nation "means that they belong to God in a way that other people do not. Above all, it lays on them the obligation to be holy (1:15–16) so that the fact that they are God's people is visible in the quality of their lives."

[43] Schutter (1989, 37) classifies 2:9 as an "explicit allusion" to Ex 19:5–6 and Isa 43:20–21. He (pp. 39–40) views 2:9 as an amalgam of the two. He (1989, 38) also classifies 2:9 as an "implicit allusion" to Isa 42:12; Mal 3:17; Hag 2:9.

[44] Kelly (1969, 40) says "similarly chosen was the epithet regularly used by the Jews to express their conviction that God had singled them out from all nations to be his special people (Deut 4:37; 7:6; 14:2; Ps 105:6; Isa 14:4). In Maccabean times and later the growing consciousness of living in a hostile environment strengthened

This Isaiah allusion comes from a passage where God expresses his concern to redeem his people from Babylon. He will provide for them just as he did on the way from Egypt to the Promised Land. "Now, for the third time, God actively redeems, and Peter identifies his readers as the objects of God's choice and care, the new Israel" (Marshall 1991, 74). This dynamic interaction between 1 Peter and Isaiah 43 can be typified as heuristic imitation. The author of 1 Peter wants to redefine the readers through a rewriting of the Isaiah text.

In the original context of Isaiah 43, the nature of his "praise" is not specified. In 1 Peter 2:9 the idea is developed, indicating that they are the praises of him "who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

Let us now look at the possible reference to Hosea 1:6–2:1 in 1 Peter 2:10:

וַתַּהַר ע֣וֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּת
וַיֹּאמֶר ל֣וֹ קְרָא־שְׁמָהּ
לֹא־רֻחָמָה כִּי לֹא אֹסִיף עוֹד אֶרְחַם אֶת־בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־נָשֹׂא אֶשָּׂא לָהֶם׃
7 וְאֶת־בֵּית יְהוּדָה אֲרַחֵם
וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּים בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם וְלֹא אוֹשִׁיעֵם
בְּקֶשֶׁת וּבְחֶרֶב וּבְמִלְחָמָה בְּסוּסִים וּבְפָרָשִׁים׃
8 וַתִּגְמֹל אֶת־לֹא רֻחָמָה וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן
9 וַיֹּאמֶר קְרָא שְׁמוֹ לֹא עַמִּי כִּי אַתֶּם לֹא אֶהְיֶה לָכֶם׃ ס
21 וְהָיָה מִסְפַּר בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּחוֹל הַיָּם אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־יִמַּד וְלֹא יִסָּפֵר וְהָיָה בִּמְקוֹם
אֲשֶׁר־יֵאָמֵר
לָהֶם לֹא־עַמִּי אַתֶּם יֵאָמֵר לָהֶם בְּנֵי אֵל־חָי׃

[6]καὶ συνέλαβεν ἔτι καὶ ἔτεκεν θυγατέρα. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Κάλεσον τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς Οὐκ-ἠλεημένη, διότι οὐ μὴ προσθήσω ἔτι ἐλεῆσαι τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰσραήλ, ἀλλ' ἢ ἀντι τασσόμενος ἀντιτάξομαι αὐτοῖς. [7]τοὺς δὲ υἱοὺς Ιουδα ἐλεήσω καὶ σώσω αὐτοὺς ἐν κυρίῳ θεῷ αὐτῶν καὶ οὐ σώσω αὐτοὺς ἐν τόξῳ οὐδὲ ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ οὐδὲ ἐν πολέμῳ οὐδὲ ἐν ἅρμασιν οὐδὲ ἐν ἵπποις οὐδὲ ἐν ἱππεῦσιν.

[6]Gomer conceived again and gave birth to a daughter. Then the LORD said to Hosea, "Call her Lo-Ruhamah, for I will no longer show love to the house of Israel, that I should at all forgive them. [7]Yet I will show love to the house of Judah; and I will save them—not by bow, sword or battle, or by horses and horsemen, but by the LORD their God."

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this conviction (e.g. Jub 2:20); at Qumran, too, the sectaries regarded themselves as God's elect (e.g. 1QS 8:6; 11:16; 1QpHab 10:13)." Best (1971:70) adds to this: "Israel believed itself to be chosen, selected or elected by God (Hos 11:1; Ezek 20:5; Isa 41:8f; 51:2; Ps 105:43). This belief was emphasized in the inter-testament period, e.g. the faithful in 1 Enoch are known as 'the elect' (cf. 1QS 8:6; 11:16). The early Christians, viewing themselves as the people of God, realized also that they had been 'chosen' by God to be so."

[8]καὶ ἀπεγαλάκτισεν τὴν Οὐκ-
ἠλεημένην καὶ συνέλαβεν ἔτι καὶ
ἔτεκεν υἱόν. [9]καὶ εἶπεν Κάλεσον
τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Οὐ-λαός-μου, διότι
ὑμεῖς οὐ λαός μου, καὶ ἐγὼ οὔκ
εἰμι ὑμῶν. [2:1]Καὶ ἦν ὁ ἀριθμὸς
τῶν υἱῶν Ισραηλ ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς
θαλάσσης, ἣ οὐκ ἐκμετρηθήσεται
οὐδὲ ἐξαριθμηθήσεται, καὶ ἔσται
ἐν τῷ τόπῳ, οὗ ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς Οὐ
λαός μου ὑμεῖς, ἐκεῖ κληθήσονται υἱοὶ
θεοῦ ζῶντος. [2]καὶ συναχθήσονται οἱ
υἱοὶ Ιουδα καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ Ισραηλ ἐπὶ τὸ
αὐτὸ καὶ θήσονται ἑαυτοῖς ἀρχὴν
μίαν καὶ ἀναβήσονται ἐκ τῆς γῆς,
ὅτι μεγάλη ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ Ιεζραελ.
[3]εἴπατε τῷ ἀδελφῷ ὑμῶν Λαός-μου
καὶ τῇ ἀδελφῇ ὑμῶν Ἠλεημένη.

[8]After she had weaned Lo-
Ruhamah, Gomer had another son.
[9]Then the LORD said, "Call him
Lo-Ammi, for you are not my
people, and I am not your God.
[10]"Yet the Israelites will be like the
sand on the seashore, which cannot
be measured or counted. In the place
where it was said to them, 'You
are not my people,' they will be
called 'sons of the living God.'
[11] The people of Judah and
the people of Israel will be
reunited, and they will appoint one
leader and will come up out of the
land, for great will be the day of
Jezreel. [2:1]"Say of your brothers,
'My people,' and of your sisters,
'My loved one.' . . .

1 Peter 2:10 implicitly alludes to Hosea 1:6–2:1 (cf. Schutter 1989, 37). While 2:9 brings together items from different contexts, 2:10 telescopes items from this single, relatively long passage. In a way it summarizes part of Hosea's message: Once they were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once they had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. The dynamic interaction between 1 Peter and Hosea can be typified as heuristic imitation. The author wants to redefine the readers through a new application of the Hosea text, now no longer exclusively on the Israelites, but on all those who believe in Christ.

These considerations pertaining to Exodus 19:5–6, Isaiah 43:20–21 and Hosea 1:6–2:1 as an inter-text of 1 Peter 2:9–10 do not add any new dimensions to the interpretation of the metaphor "the saved as people/nation of God" in 1 Peter.

It is now possible to draw a conclusion on the *ab quo* and the *ad quem* that this imagery (the saved as being transformed into the people/nation of God) signals:

- The believers were aliens and strangers, scattered individuals without security, without a sense of belonging and without being integrated into a nation. Now, since having become not only God's family and part and parcel of his household, they have become not just "a" nation, but the *chosen* people, the *holy* nation, the people *of God*!

4.2. *The Saved As a Flock of Sheep Having Been Returned to Christ As (chief) Shepherd*[45]

<**2:25**> ἦτε γὰρ ὡς πρόβατα πλανώμενοι, ἀλλὰ ἐπεστράφητε νῦν ἐπὶ τὸν *ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον* τῶν θυχῶν ὑμῶν.[25]	For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have (been) returned[46] to *the Shepherd and Overseer* of your souls.
<**5:2**> ποιμάνατε τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν *ποίμνιον τοῦ θεοῦ* [ἐπισκοποῦντες]	[2]Be shepherds of *God's flock* that is under your care, serving as overseers . . .
<**5:4**> καὶ φανερωθέντος *τοῦ ἀρχιποίμενος* κομιεῖσθε τὸν ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον	[4]And when *the Chief Shepherd* appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

This imagery focuses on the phenomenon that a flock of sheep (5:2: ποίμνιον) going astray (2:25: πρόβατα πλανώμενοι) is without shepherd (2:25: ποιμένα), and is therefore in grave danger. The surprising elements of this imagery are: (1) The shepherd is also overseer, and he cares not only for the body and the physical needs of the sheep, but for their souls; (2) Christ, as Chief Shepherd, appoints fellow-sheep as his assistant-shepherds to oversee the flock.

In this imagery in 2:25 there is possible reference to Ezekiel 34:16:

Τὸ ἀπολωλὸς ζητήσω καὶ τὸ *πλανώμενον ἐπιστρέψω* καὶ τὸ συντετριμμένον καταδήσω καὶ τὸ ἐκλεῖπον ἐνισχύσω καὶ τὸ ἰσχυρὸν φυλάξω καὶ βοσκήσω αὐτὰ μετὰ κρίματος.	אֶת-הָאֹבֶדֶת אְבַקֵּשׁ וְאֶת-הַנִּדַּחַת *אֲשִׁיב* וְהַנֶּלֱנָ֣ה שִׁבֵּרֶת אֶחֱבֹשׁ וְאֶת-הַחֹלָה אְחַזֵּק וְאֶת-הַשְּׁמֵנָה וְאֶת-הֶחָזָקָה אַשְׁמִיד אְרֶעֶנָּה :בְּמִשְׁפָּט
	I will search for the lost and *bring back the strays.* I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

1 Peter 2:25 is an implicit allusion to Ezekiel 34:16. The reference is not at all precise in wording, as is evident from the following comparison:

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[45] Key words: ποιμαίνω, ποίμνιον τοῦ θεοῦ, ποιμήν, ἀρχιποίμην, ἐπίσκοπος.

[46] The NIV translates the verb ἐπεστράφητε with "you have returned", creating the impression that it is out of own volition that the sheep returned to the shepherd. A better translation of the passive mode is: "you have *been* returned".

πλανώμενοι, ἀλλὰ ἐπεστράφητε →← τὸ πλανώμενον ἐπιστρέψῳ →← וְאֶת-הַנִּדָּחַת אֲשִׁיב.

However, since Ezekiel as subtext probably was well known, even this implicit allusion would have been sufficient to evoke the presence of this subtext.[47] The type of dynamic interaction between 1 Peter 2:25 and Ezekiel 34:16 is heuristic imitation.

These considerations pertaining to Ezekiel 34:16 as an inter-text of 1 Peter 2:25 do not add any new dimensions to the interpretation of the metaphor "the saved as flock of sheep having been returned to Christ as shepherd" in 1 Peter.

It is now possible to draw a conclusion on the *ab quo* and the *ad quem* that this imagery (the saved as a flock of sheep having been returned to Christ as (chief) shepherd) signals:

- They were lost and without anybody looking out for them; now they are under the loving care of Christ, because they have been returned to their Shepherd.
- They were without leaders, but now Christ as Chief Shepherd has appointed from their midst assistant-shepherds to oversee them.

4.3. *The Saved as Having Been Healed by Christ's Wound*[48]

<**2:24**> ὅς τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν αὐτὸς ἀνήνεγκεν ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον, ἵνα ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ ζήσωμεν, *οὗ τῷ μώλωπι ἰάθητε.*

[24]He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; *by his wounds you have been healed.*

This metaphor focuses on the believers as being persons who have been healed (2:24: ἰάθητε). The surprising element of this metaphor is that the healing process is not through medicine of some kind, but by "the wound of Christ" (2:24: οὗ τῷ μώλωπι). This metaphor explicates the preceding statement that Christ bore the sins of the

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[47] The very verse preceding this allusion, Ezekiel 34:5, is actually quite relevant to the context of 1 Peter 2:25. Ezekiel 34:5 reads: "So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals." Also Isaiah 53:6 may have been called to mind by the implicit allusion: "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."

[48] Key words: τῷ μώλωπι ἰάομαι.

believers in his body on the tree, so that they might die to sins and live for righteousness (2:24a).

In this imagery in 2:24 there is a possible reference to Isaiah 53:5:

αὐτὸς δὲ ἐτραυματίσθη διὰ τὰς ἀνομίας ἡμῶν καὶ μεμαλάκισται διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν, παιδεία εἰρήνης ἡμῶν ἐπ᾽ αὐτόν, *τῷ μώλωπι αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς ἰάθημεν.*	וְהוּא֙ מְחֹלָ֣ל מִפְּשָׁעֵ֔נוּ מְדֻכָּ֖א מֵֽעֲוֹנֹתֵ֑ינוּ מוּסַ֤ר שְׁלוֹמֵ֙נוּ֙ עָלָ֔יו וּבַחֲבֻרָתּ֖וֹ נִרְפָּא-לָֽנוּ׃	But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and *by his wounds we are healed.*

1 Peter 2:24 is clearly an explicit allusion to Isaiah 53:5 (so also Schutter 1989, 37). All the elements of Isaiah 53:5 are present: The personal pronoun *αὐτού* is just changed to the relative pronoun *οὗ*, and the first person of the verb is changed to the second person, and the personal pronoun dropped: ἰάθητε →← ἡμεῖς ἰάθημεν. First Peter's use of Isaiah 53:5 does not fit into any of the four categories of dynamic interaction between the Old and New Testament that Moyise (1995) has developed. Another category has to be added, namely exact imitation. The author of 1 Peter alludes to the text in Isaiah, using it in the very way it seems to have been intended in Isaiah.[49]

These considerations pertaining to Isaiah 53:5 as an inter-text of 1 Peter 2:24 do not add any new dimensions to the interpretation of the metaphor "the saved as healed by Christ's wound" in 1 Peter.

It is now possible to draw a conclusion on the *ab quo* and the *ad quem* that this imagery (the saved as having been healed by Christ's wound) signals:

- They were mortally wounded and sick to death; now they are well since the have been healed, and they are fit and ready to live for righteousness!

[49] That 1 Peter remains true to the intention of the Isaiah context, is confirmed by the very preceding verse, Isaiah 53:4: "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted." Schutter (1989, 38) classifies 2:24 as an 'implicit allusion' to Isa 53:4.

4.4. *Conclusion: Salvific Imageries in 1 Peter*

This identification and interpretation of salvific metaphors in 1 Peter suggests the following three imageries:

a) The saved as family, with God as father
   - The saved as children of a father who has begotten them, and who have tasted the milk he provides.
   - The saved as redeemed by God into his household, with the precious blood of Christ.
   - The saved as being transformed into the people/nation of God
b) The saved as a flock of sheep having been returned to Christ as (chief) shepherd.
c) The saved as having been healed by Christ's wound.

5. Conclusion

It is clear that 1 Peter develops his soteriology mainly by means of family imagery. He does not describe the soteriology as a stagnant event, but as a complex of relations and events. God's saving act is pictured as a father giving birth, and more or less simultaneous with the birth, feeding the newborn baby colostrum. Within this same imagery the saving event is also pictured as a *patria potestas* who redeems (as if redeeming a slave) the saved into his household, using the precious blood of Christ as currency. A final element of this family imagery is that of a king transforming the saved into his nation.

Two further (albeit subsidiary) imageries are, however, also used: The saved as a flock of sheep having been returned to Christ as (chief) shepherd, and the saved as having been healed by Christ's wound.

The *ab quo* and the *ad quem* each of these imageries signals are the following:

The saved as family, with God as father:

- Before the first readers/hearers of 1 Peter became Christians, they were loose individuals, dead in sin. Now they are a family, God having become their father through begetting them.
- Immediately after birth (actually, as part of the birth process) the newborn baby receives colostrum, signalling God's gracious goodness in having made them his children just because he wanted to.

Two things happen to the newborn babies: they experience the goodness of God's "first" milk (colostrum), and this wets the appetite for more milk. All of this results in the newborn baby growing up into a powerful person, and not remaining a weak baby.

- They were the property of some other powerful person, not specified in the metaphor, sold into slavery. God has redeemed them, and now they are free!
- They were slaves to an empty way of life handed down to them from their forefathers, but now they are slaves to God, having been redeemed by God!
- They were worthless and would not fetch a price. However, God values them so much that he paid a precious price: the precious blood of Christ.
- They were homeless; now they have become part and parcel of the household of God!
- The believers were aliens and strangers, scattered individuals without security, without a sense of belonging and without being integrated into a nation. Now, since having become not only God's family and part and parcel of his household, they have become not just "a" nation, but the *chosen* people, the *holy* nation, the people *of God*!

The saved as a flock of sheep having been returned to Christ as (chief) shepherd:

- They were lost and without anybody looking out for them; now they are under the loving care of Christ, because they have been returned to their Shepherd.
- They were without leaders, but now Christ as Chief Shepherd has appointed from their midst assistant-shepherds to oversee them.

The saved as having been healed by Christ's wound:

- They were mortally wounded and sick to death; now they are well since the have been healed, and they are fit and ready to live for righteousness!

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CHAPTER FOUR

SALVATION IN THE JOHANNINE EPISTLES

Dirk G. van der Merwe
University of South Africa

1. Introduction

Soteriology, as it is dealt with in the Johannine epistles, is among the most complex (cf. Edwards 2000, 193) teachings in the New Testament. Nowhere in these epistles do we find a clear or categorical explanation. The soteriology is so intricately interwoven with other themes that a discussion of its various components cannot escape repetition. Like the gospel of John, 1 John has often been likened to a spiral. Throughout the epistle the author regularly returns to a point where he has been before, but by bringing in a new element he moves a step further. This spiral is not merely a technique of literary style and structure, but is equally an expression of thought-structure.[1] This would imply that themes and ideas are interwoven. Therefore, it would be impossible to explore one without saying something about the others as well.

The argument to be expounded in this chapter will be dealt with as follows: Initially various soteriological expressions will be determined. This will help to construct the profile of the discussion. These expressions will be interpreted within the social framework of the Johannine community, which gave rise to the writing of these epistles. This will help readers understand the presentation and argumentation of certain themes and the choice and meaning of specific expressions. Some orientation will be provided regarding the approach to soteriology in the Johannine epistles, and the role of Jesus in the salvation events will be discussed. Special emphasis will be placed on how a person becomes saved and, finally, the implications of salvation in the lives of God's children will be expostulated.

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[1] Lieu (1997, 22–23); Thomas (1998, 371); cf. also Malatesta (1978, 77); Hiebert (1988, 201); Coetzee (1993, 211); Thomas (1998, 371); Kenney (2000a, 21).

To introduce this research, a methodological remark is necessary: Since there are close connections between the three Johannine epistles, we shall look at 1 John as the main source for this discussion on soteriology, and 2 and 3 John will be incorporated where applicable and necessary. Any similarities or differences between these sources will be pointed out only when it is relevant and will contribute to the discussion.

2. Identification of the Various Soteriological Expressions in the Johannine Epistles

Within scholarship, two distinct and disparate views have developed concerning the message of 1 John. They have arisen as a consequence of two variant perceptions of the purpose of the epistle. The one comprises "salvation" (τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον) and the other "fellowship" (κοινωνίαν) (see Derickson 1993, 89–105; cf. also Kenney 2000a). In fact they are complementary to one another. Both these themes are mentioned in the prologue of 1 John, where the author (hereafter referred to as the elder)[2] gives, as we may expect, a synopsis of his principal motifs.

Like the Fourth Gospel, 1 John concentrates on the assurance of the present experience of eternal life. It mentions eternal life at least 10 times,[3] always emphasising the present: ἡμεῖς οἴδαμεν ὅτι μεταβεβήκαμεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωήν (3:14). In Christ God has already given us eternal life: ὁ ἔχων τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει τὴν ζωήν (5:11–12). The purpose here is to reassure the adherents of the elder, who rejected the teaching of the deceivers and abided in the teaching they had heard from the beginning (2:24), that they might know that they have eternal life (2:25; 5:13).

This purpose of the epistle, according to Lieu (1997, 22; cf. also Thomas 1998, 379; Kenney 2000a, 47), is stated explicitly at the

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[2] In this chapter it has been accepted, in agreement with the point of view of most scholars, that the three Johannine epistles were written by the same person, referred to in 2 John 1 and 3 John 1 as the πρεσβύτερος (Brown 1997, 398; Culpepper 1998, 251; Kenney 2000, 12). Therefore, in this document, the author will be referred to as "the elder".

[3] "Eternal Life" is mentioned in 1 John in: 1:2; 2:25; 3:15; 5:11, 13, 20. The adjective αἰώνιος is often silently understood when ζωή is used in an absolute sense: 1 John 1:2; 3:14; 5:11–12, 16 (Von Wahlde 1990, 16).

beginning (1:2), at the critical point where the opponents are mentioned for the first time (2:25f), and at the end of the letter (5:12f, 20). Here, in the prologue, Jesus Christ is proclaimed as "the life" (τῆς ζωῆς). He τῆς ζωῆς has appeared and is the content of "declaration" (1:2, ἀπαγγέλλομεν). The excessive piling up of the four verbs ἀκηκόαμεν, ἑωράκαμεν, ἐθεασάμεθα and ἐψηλάφησαν serves but one purpose: "to stress the absolute authenticity of the evidence and thus the indubitable certainty of the faith" (Coetzee 1993, 210; Strecker 1996, 19).

The promise of "eternal life" at the critical point of the letter, after the first introduction of the schismatics, constitutes both the basis for and the goal of the remaining faithful (2:25). Verse 2:23 states that denying or confessing (believe—3:23; 5:1, 5, 10, 13) the Son is the precondition for (not) having the Father, which prepares the reader for the promise of eternal life (2:25). The same occurs in verse 5:12, where the statement ὁ ἔχων τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει τὴν ζωήν prepares the reader for the definite assurance that they shall "have eternal life" through faith in the Son of God (5:13).

So far the following soteriological expressions from a Christocentric perspective have been identified: *to believe, Son* (of God) and *eternal life*. At the end of chapter 2 (2:29), a new perspective is introduced, but now from a theocentric point of view,[4] which comprises that a "child of God" is someone that has been "born of God" and "abides in God and God in him/her". This perspective does not oppose the Christocentric perspective, but complements it in that it describes salvation from another perspective and simultaneously links the theme of "salvation" with the theme of "fellowship". This is apparent from the fact that the Christian's conduct is demonstrated primarily through his/her relationship with God (the Father).

In the light of the above discussion it can therefore be deduced that, Christologically, the centre of the soteriology of the Johannine epistles may be formulated as follows: "*Believers can now know for certain that they have eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*"[5] From a theological perspective one might say:[6] "*Believers can*

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[4] γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ **θεου** (3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18; cf. 2:29); τέκνα **θεοῦ** (3:1, 2, 10; 5:2, 19); ἐκ τοῦ **θεοῦ** ἐστιν (3:10; 4:2, 3, 4, 6, 7; 3 John 11; cf. also 2:16; 3:22; 4:21); (cf. also Kenney 2000a, 46).

[5] Hengel (1989, 58f) points out how the elder uses Ἰησοῦς Χριστός as a proper name six times, while the singular form Ἰησοῦς is used five times in connection with confessional formulations: 2:22; 4:3, 15; 5:1, 5. See also Brown (1982, 51).

[6] ὁ ἔχων (**πιστεύων**) τὸν υἱὸν (*Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός*) . . . ἔχει τὴν ζωήν . . . ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται . . . ἵνα τέκνα θεοῦ κληθῶμεν.

know that they are children of God (that they are from God) through their birth from God and consequently have fellowship with God."

A convergence of these two perspectives on the centre of soteriology is best spelled out in 5:1–5, where it forms a chiasm and proves to have the same semantic meaning.

5:1 Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός	**5:4f πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ θεου**
ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται	*ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*

The Christological perspective focuses on the human responsibility: to believe. The theological perspective presents it from the divine side: to be born from God.

This understanding of soteriology by the elder is due to the misunderstanding of and teaching on this topic in the Johannine community, which led to a schism in the community. We will now briefly look into social circumstances of the Johannine Community that could have caused the schism.

3. Some Thoughts about the Social Framework[7] That Influenced the Interpretation and Understanding of Johannine Soteriology

First and Second John depict a community torn apart by doctrinal and ethical differences. According to Culpepper (1998, 48), the differences had precipitated a schism by the time 1 John was written. A helpful starting point for identifying[8] the opponents who caused the schism can be found in 1 John 2:18–19. These verses indicate that there had been a time when the opponents were not differentiated

[7] When writing about the Soteriology of the Johannine Epistles, one has to consider epistemological questions relating to authorship, date, purpose, central theme, and the identity of the opponents and recipients. Unfortunately there is a great deal of disagreement among scholars concerning these questions. For the purpose of this writing, these questions will not be argued. I shall present the most popular and widely accepted points of view on these issues.

[8] Many attempts have been made to identify the opponents of 1 John. Unfortunately none of these identifications are convincing. Therefore we can agree with Edwards (2000, 161; see also Du Plessis 1978, 101) that we cannot negate the existence of "opponents" or "deceivers", but that the precise historical situation cannot be reliably reconstructed. However, from the text it is possible to make some deductions concerning how their beliefs influenced the polemic-pastoral message of the elder.

from the adherents of the elder. Key texts that facilitate the identification of the opponents are: 2:26 (πλανώντων); 4:1 (ψευδοπροφῆται); 2:22, 18 (ψεύστης, ἀντίχριστος). These texts create the impression that the author is concerned about the possible deception of his adherents. The deception is already a reality; it has already caused a rift in the community (Kenney 2000b, 101). The present tense use of the verb πλανώντων (deceive) is significant here, emphasizing the ongoing or immediate nature of the deception (cf. Danker 2000, 821).

In his repudiation of the position of the deceivers, the elder presents statements that explain his own position and that of his opponents. The statements relate to: claims regarding their status, statements about various ethical considerations, and statements about Jesus (Von Wahlde 1990, 108).

These deceivers claimed a special illumination by the Spirit (2:20, 27) that imparted to them the true knowledge of God. This caused them to regard themselves to be *the* children of God. This explains the strong emphasis by the elder on the knowledge of God and the way in which he and his adherents became children of God (to receive salvation) (5:1–5). He contrasts the heretics' claim to knowledge with the knowledge that can come only from the Christian tradition (2:24).

Through this spiritual illumination, these heretics claimed to have attained a state beyond ordinary Christian morality in which they had no more sin and attained moral perfection (1:8–10). This group taught that all believers had been delivered from sin and had already crossed from death into life (1 John 1:8, 10; 3:14). This strong emphasis on realized eschatology led to a disregard for the need to continue to resist sin. Their chief ethical error appears to be a spiritual pride that led them to despise ordinary Christians who did not claim to have attained the same level of spiritual illumination. The elder warns his readers against claiming to be without sin (1 John 1:8–22). He admonishes those who claim to know God, but disobey His commandments[9] (1:6–7; 2:4–6; 5:2–3), or who claim to love God, but do not love their brothers (and sisters) (2:7–11; 3:10–18, 23; 4:7–11, 20–21).

[9] Von Wahlde (1990, 69) points out that the elder attributes the commandments to God (their ultimate source), rather than to Jesus, because the opponents questioned the role of Jesus. According to him the Johannine community focused on two requirements: that the adherents of the elder "keep the words of Jesus" and that they "love one another".

He also cautions against loving the world and warns against its power and temptations (2:15–17; 4:4–6; 5:19). These admonitions focused on the way of life of those who claimed to be children of God.

This perception influenced their perception of Jesus and advocated a "higher" Christology that emphasized the divinity of Christ while minimizing the humanity of Jesus (1 John 2:19; 4:2) (Kenney 2000b, 101; also Brown 1982, 52; Lieu 1986, 207). They denied the incarnation (2:22; 4:1). Because of their belief that since matter was *ipso facto* evil, God could not possibly have come into direct contact with the phenomenal world through Christ. Therefore they denied the incarnation in general terms. They went even further by denying the reality of Jesus' suffering. They accepted his baptism, but refused to accept the passion as part of the messianic work of salvation (5:6). A host of statements in the epistles can be pieced together in an effort to characterize the teaching of the false prophets. There are series of statements that indicate a serious disagreement about the person of Jesus Christ (1 John 2:22; 4:2, 3, 15; 5:1, 5, 6, 10, 13; 2 John 7). Together these statements yield a list of what the author urges his readers to believe and confess: Jesus is "the Messiah"; he has "come in the flesh"; he is "the Son of God"; he came by "water and blood". In other words, they have to "believe in" Jesus (3:23; 5:1, 5, 10, 13) and "confess" (2:22, 23) him.

Thus, it seems clear that the controversy in the Johannine Community was based on differences in the interpretation of a shared tradition (Kenney 2000b, 102; Culpepper 1998, 253). For this reason the elder writes to urge his readers μὴ παντὶ πνεύματι πιστεύετε ἀλλὰ δοκιμάζετε τὰ πνεύματα εἰ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν (4:1), which implies that they are to measure the charismatic utterances of all so-called prophets by the norm of the sound Christian tradition, at the centre of which is the real incarnation of Christ (4:2–3). In response to this crisis, the elder wrote 1 John to warn the community of the dangers of this false teaching, to correct this false teaching and to encourage those who remained to continue in their faithfulness. Second, John was written to warn a sister community of the dangers that were posed by this group (Culpepper 1998, 60), and third, John was written to advise a certain Gaius on how to deal with Diotrephes (v. 9), who was probably a schismatic (Ladd 1998, 665).

From a soteriological point of view we can conclude that the *dangers of this false teaching*, the denial of Jesus' incarnation, would lead to an existence without God, Christ/eternal life. The *correction of this false*

teaching would be to explain how to become children of God (have fellowship with God) and live a life in accordance with their true faith. The *encouragement* of the adherents of the elder would be to point out to them that they may be assured that through their faith in the Son of God (which implies obedience to his commandments) they have eternal life.

4. Orientation Concerning Soteriology As Dealt within the Johannine Epistles

The angle from which the soteriology in the Johannine epistles will be approached and discussed is of crucially importance, for it contributes to the true depiction thereof. The language used for referring to the adherents of the elder is strikingly familial. These believers are τέκνα θεοῦ (3:1–2, 10; 5:2), γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ (2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18). They confess that God is πατήρ (1:2; 2:1, 14–15, 22–24; 3:1; 2 John 4). These adherents are ἀδελφόν (and sisters) to each other. The elder also repeatedly addresses his flock as τεκνία (2:1, 12, 28; 3:7), and ἀγαπητοί (2:7; 3:2, 21; 4:1, 7, 11; cf. 3 John 1, 2, 5, 11).

In his epistle, the elder portrays the Christian life as existence in a family, the family of God, where God, the Father, is the head. The opponents of the elder are depicted as existing outside this family. They are referred to as τέκνα τοῦ διαβόλου and ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου εἰσίν. In the sphere of the family the child of God will live a life true to God's nature. Already in 1:5, God is characterized by the elder as ὁ θεὸς φῶς ἐστιν καὶ σκοτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία.[10] Light qualifies both God's nature and his domain (see Schnackenburg 1953, 77). That God is light means that He is the origin of his family's new way of being (Malatesta 1978, 105).

To become a member of this family a person has be born into it. This happens through faith in Jesus Christ, the (μονογενῆ) Son of God. This is necessary, for the child of God has to take on the same life as the Father, which means "to walk in the light" (1:7, ἐν τῷ φωτὶ περιπατῶμεν) or, otherwise expressed, "to walk just as Jesus walked."

[10] God is also characterized elsewhere in 1 John as: πιστός (1:9), δίκαιος (1:9; 2:29), ἀγάπη (4:16).

The impression created here is that salvation comprises *to become part, through birth, of this family of which God is the Father.* This rebirth is constituted through "faith in Jesus Christ."

5. The Important Role of Jesus in the Salvific Events

Law (quoted by Malatesta 1978, 96) remarks: ". . . it is the writer's immediate contemplation of the moral nature of God and his governing idea of salvation as participation in that nature that inevitably cause him to carry up the thought of the indwelling Christ to the ultimate truth of the indwelling God." Hence, God's own life has been revealed to us in Christ. It is because God is pure light and without any darkness that he can purify his children through Christ, enabling them to walk in light and to have fraternal communion (cf. 2 Cor 5:14). Through Jesus Christ a person receives God's light and life because he himself, the Son of God, is the light and life (1 John 1f; John 1–4).

This is the case because a unique *relationship exists between the Father and his Son Jesus Christ.* Throughout 1 and 2 John, Jesus is mentioned in association with the Father, predominantly with the connotation, "the Father of Jesus Christ".[11] In these letters this title reflects the intimate, indissoluble unity between the Father and the Son (Coetzee 1993, 219). One gets the impression that in his total opposition to the false prophets (θευδοπροφῆται, 4:1), the elder wishes to emphasize the intimate bond of love between the Father and Son and their essential unity.

When Jesus is referred to as τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ or (μονογενῆ, 4:9) τὸν υἱὸν, it is in close conjunction with "the Father" (ὁ πατήρ): Πᾶς ὁ ἀρνούμενος τὸν υἱὸν οὐδὲ τὸν πατέρα ἔχει, ὁ ὁμολογῶν τὸν υἱὸν καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἔχει (2:23; see also 1:3; 4:14). A repeated parallelism occurs, effectively putting the Father and the Son on an equal level (1:3; 2:23; 4:15; 5:11, 12) (Edwards 2000, 160). The close bond between Jesus as Son and God as Father is such that, for the believer, the experience of one carries with it experience of the other (2:24) (Lieu 1997, 72).

[11] 1:2, 3; 2:1, 22–24; 4:14; 2 John 3, 9; cf. also 1:2; 4:2, 3, 10; 5:10.

For the Father to communicate his "light" (φωτί) to the world the Son of God had to become incarnate. To prove the reality of his incarnation the elder begins his epistle by emphasizing the physical dimension (ἀκηκόαμεν, ἑωράκαμεν, ἐθεασάμεθα, ἐψηλάφησαν) of Jesus' life (1:1) (cf. Hiebert 1988, 203). He emphasizes his baptism and death (5:6, ἐλθὼν δι ὕδατος καὶ αἵματος), his moral conduct (2:1, δίκαιον; 2:6, περιεπάτησεν; 3:3, ἁγνός, 3:5, ἁμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν), the willing sacrifice of his life (3:16, τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἔθηκεν), and his *parousia* (2:28; 4:17, παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ) (cf. Kenney 2000a, 49). Hence, the Christology presented in 1 John is fully incarnational.

In 4:2 the elder states that the confession required from the child of God, to establish that "he is from God", is essentially to acknowledge the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The spiritual outcome of this "acknowledgment" (ὁμολογεῖ) is depicted more fully in 4:15, where a clear progression of theological thought is present. Such an "acknowledgment" (ὁμολογεῖ; cf. 2 John 7 for μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες) of the incarnation of Jesus (4:2), proclaimed in the tradition (2:24), leads to intimate fellowship with God in Christ (ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ μένει καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ θεῷ, 4:15b).

The incarnation was the outcome of the sending of God's only Son into the world so that God's children might live through him. In 1 John 4:9 the elder tells how God's love has been conclusively revealed to the Church and the world: . . . τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἀπέσταλκεν ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα ζήσωμεν δι' αὐτοῦ. This is expanded in 3:16, ἐν τούτῳ ἐγνώκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην, because Jesus ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἔθηκεν. The elder explicitly states three points in the present context: that it is God's love (ἀγάπη); love initiated the plan for our salvation (ζήσωμεν); that for this purpose he has sent (ἀπέσταλκεν)[12] his Son into the world.

A comparison of verses 4:9, 10 and 14 indicates that they are similar in their purport: (*a*) The activity of God described in these contexts, by which his love is manifested, is regarded as salvific in purpose: the Son was "sent" into the world ἵνα ζήσωμεν δι' αὐτου (v. 9), as an ἱλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν (v. 10), and as σωτῆρα

[12] In 4:9 and 14 the verb ἀποστέλλω is used in the perfect tense (ἀπέσταλκεν), suggesting an action (of God) in the past which had a lasting effect (cf. also Haas, De Jonge, Swellengrebel 1972, 108). In 4:10, the use of this verb in the aorist tense (ἀπέστειλεν) draws attention to the specific act of sacrifice in which God's eternal love was embodied.

τοῦ κόσμου (v. 14). (*b*) In each verse it appears that God the Father of Jesus Christ, is deeply involved in his world and has acted in history for the purpose of man's salvation (Dodd 1946, 110f). (*c*) The saving act of "sending" Jesus involved the serving life, as well as the death, of God's Son. This is implied in 4:9 (ζήσωμεν) by the parallels in 4:10 (Jesus as ἱλασμόν) and 4:14 (Jesus as σωτῆρα). (*d*) Jesus is described in all three verses as τὸν υἱὸν (v. 9, τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ; v. 10, τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ; v. 14, τὸν υἱὸν), who was sent by God.

The Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know Him (God) who is true. In 5:20 the elder refers to Jesus as the one who was instrumental in δέδωκεν[13] ἡμῖν διάνοιαν ἵνα γινώσκωμεν τὸν ἀληθινόν. The adjective ἀληθινόν refers to God. In view of the obvious contrast with the "false gods" of 5:21, the elder is undoubtedly speaking here of God as ultimate reality.

The function of the coming of the Son of God was to give the children of God (note the personal pronoun, first person plural—ἡμῖν) διάνοιαν, which Danker (2000, 234) defines as "the faculty of thinking, comprehending, and reasoning, *understanding, intelligence, mind.*" Thus, through Jesus, the children of God receive "insight" (metaphorically speaking: light) that they may know God in a mature relationship (cf. further 2:13–14; 3:1; 4:6–8). This is fully realized in Jesus Christ, to whom in the NT the adjective ἀληθινός is also attributed (John 15:1; Rev 3:7; cf. also 2:8b; John 1:9; 4:23; Rev 3:14) (cf. Smalley 1984, 306f).

The life that God has given to his children is in his Son. In 1 John 1:1f, "eternal life" (τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον) is personified, by the elder, in the person of Jesus Christ (cf. Du Plessis 1978, 20). In 5, 11f Jesus is presented as the one who mediates this "life" (αὕτη ἡ ζωὴ ἐν τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ ἐστιν) given by God. Thus Jesus *is* life and *mediates* life.

This life originally "existed with the Father" (1:2); and it is perfectly manifested in God's Son (cf. 5:11*b*). The term "life" is a soteriological term, which the elder explains as τῆν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον,[14] and which indicates the *quality* of life (cf. Derickson 1993, 97; Hiebert 1988, 206) in God's family, which God has made available through

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[13] The verb δέδωκεν is in the perfect tense because (like ἥ κει in the previous clause) it describes the ongoing result of an action that has taken place.

[14] For this concept see John 17:2–3; also John 3:15–16; 5:24–26; 6:40, 47, 68; 10:10, 28; 11:25–26. The aorist tense of the verb ἔδωκεν emphasizes the factual and historical background to God's saving activity.

the earthly ministry of Jesus (5:6; cf. 1:1–2; cf. John 3:16; 17:2–3). This life is characterized by the very nature of God (Hiebert 1988, 206) and is a sharing of this life with God (cf. Smalley 1998, 287; See Strecker 1996, 17ff for a thorough discussion on ζωή).

Another reason why the Son of God was revealed (ἐφανερώθη) was ἵνα λύσῃ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου (3:8). This forms a parallel to the elder's claim in 3:5a that Jesus ἐφανερώθη ἵνα τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἄρῃ. The phrase τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου signifies "human sin in its entirety" (cf. Brown 1982, 407). On the contrary, the elder insists that in the Christ-event as a whole, the power of the devil to work evil was effectively broken (cf. John 12:31), even if the fulfilment of this action will not be achieved until the end (cf. 3:8*a*, 10) (Smalley 1984, 170).

The Father's saving act *culminated in Jesus' death*. The elder argues repeatedly that sin is forgiven through the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus. For him the role of Jesus in the forgiveness of sin is essential, therefore he states in 1:7: τὸ αἷμα Ἰησοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ καθαρίζει ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἁμαρτίας.[15] This statement relates to parallel statements in 2:2 and 4:10, where the elder explains what happened through Jesus' death by insisting that αὐτὸς (Ιησοῦς) ἱλασμός ἐστιν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. The noun ἱλασμός has the same semantic meaning in these texts (cf. Danker 2000, 474), where it denotes the means of forgiveness. Jesus himself is the means by which sins are forgiven (Louw & Nida 1988, 504; Klauck 1991, 108). Because he was righteous (δίκαιον, 2:2) and was sent (ἀπέστειλεν, 4:10) by God to the cross, he was the expiation (ἱλασμός) for our sins. The same reality is also expressed in 2:12: ἀφέωνται ὑμῖν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι διὰ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, and in 3:5: ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ἐφανερώθη, ἵνα τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἄρῃ. In 3:16 it is stated: ἐν τούτῳ ἐγνώκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην, ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τὴν θυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἔθηκεν. These passages are sufficient to indicate that the death of Jesus is the atonement for sin and the only way to constitute a

[15] The "blood" of Jesus occupies an important place in NT thought, and must be interpreted above all against the specific background of the cultic observances on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16; but cf. also the Passover story and ritual, Exod 12). In his suffering and death, the NT writers claim, Jesus, in perfect obedience, made the *true* and lasting sacrifice for sin (cf. Rom 3:25; Heb 9:12–14; 10:19–22; Rev 1:5; also 1 Cor 5:7). Therefore, to say here that the blood of Jesus καθαρίζει ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἁμαρτίας, means that in the cross of Christ our sin is effectively and repeatedly (καθαρίζει, is a continuous present) removed (Smalley 1984, 25). Schweizer (2000, 194) adds that the "blood of Christ" is not only expiatory, but also guarantees God's covenant.

relationship between God and man (cf. Haas, De Jonge, Swellengrebel 1972, 36).

The elder, recognizing that sin is an everpresent possibility, even for God's children, encourages them to renounce sin (2:1). In 2:1 he deals positively with the problem of sin: if anyone *should* sin, God has made provision for this—παράκλητον ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. In the Fourth Gospel the Holy Spirit is said to be sent to Jesus' disciples to be their *paraclete*. But, in 1 John Jesus is the *paraclete* for his brothers and sisters in heaven in the presence of their Father. Here the word fits the meaning of one who appears in another's behalf, *mediator, intercessor, helper* (Danker 2000, 766), or as Louw and Nida (1988, 460; cf. also Smalley 1984, 36) define it: "one who may be called upon to provide help or assistance."

In their need for divine forgiveness, says the elder, the children of God have an effective intercessor to act on their behalf and to present their case to God the Father (cf. Matt 10:32). As Son, he pleads for the sinner with (πρός) the Father. This means that Jesus intercedes in the *presence* of the Father. He does so *actively*: by (πρός) the Father, he pleads for the forgiveness of the penitent.

But Christ is also called δίκαιος in 2:1. This predicate ("being righteous") heightens the description of his ability to act as the sinner's intercessor. His own righteousness is manifested above all in the righteous act on the cross (cf. 2:2). God (who is himself δίκαιος, 1:9*a*), can cleanse his children from all unrighteousness (1:9*b*; cf. Rom 3:26) (Smalley 1984, 37f). Salvation from sin, then, is based not only upon the conciliative work of Christ upon the cross, but also upon his exalted status in the presence of God.

One of the reasons why *Jesus could abolish sin is because in him there was no sin.* God's opposition to human sin was demonstrated in the appearance of Jesus not only as the revealer of God (4:5a), but also as the Redeemer of man (3:5). This is due to the fact that ἁμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν (3:5).[16] Only as the *perfect* offering for sin (cf. 2:2*a*) could Jesus be the effective Saviour of the world (2:2*b*; cf. John 4:42). This description of Jesus as sinless (cf. also 1 Pt 1:19, 22; 3:18; Heb 8:26) is matched by the elder's positive assertions that Christ was

[16] See 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 1:19; 2:21–22; cf. John 8:46; Heb 7:26; 1 Pet 3:18). Malatesta (1978, 244) notices the parallel between verse 5*b* and the messianic text in *T. Jud.* 24:1–3, where verse 1 includes the phrase, "no sin shall be found in him".

δίκαιος (2:1, 29; 3:7), ἁγίος (2:20) and ἁγνός (3:3). This was the reason why he could free sinners and why those who remain in him will likewise be free from sin (Smalley 1984, 157; Malatesta 1978, 245).

It has been indicated that the elder's depiction of Jesus was intended to prove to his adherents that Jesus is the Christ (who came with a decisive mission of salvation) and the Son of God (who incarnated in Jesus). Therefore, he is the light and life for mankind. Only through faith in him can people become children of God.

6. Reception of Salvation

If God's Son is the Saviour, how then do people become children of God? To answer this question, the elder guides us. Sinners live in darkness and consequently cannot enjoy fellowship with God (1, 6), who is light (1:5). In order to become saved a sinner has to be born into the family of God. This is realized through faith in Jesus Christ, his Son. Before discussing these aspects of salvation we shall first have to look briefly into the elder's epistemology about sin. Sin keeps those who are ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου captured in darkness from where they have to be freed, while it influences negatively the fellowship of the τέκνα θεοῦ. "It is clear that the author regards sin with the greatest abhorrence, seeing it as incompatible with God's character and with the status of believers as God's children" (Edwards 2000, 193).

6.1. *An Orientation about the Elder's Perspective on Sin*

The claim to have "fellowship" (κοινωνία) with God the Father is a lie when it is combined with a wandering in darkness (1:6). For the elder, walking in the light is grounded in the fact that God's divine nature is light (Strecker 1996, 28). To "walk in the light" is to have fellowship with God (1:6) and with one another (1:7), which relates to "love for one another" (2:10). In 1 John 2:11, the elder points out that ἐν τῷ σκότει περιπατῶμεν refers to μισῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ. In 3:14 and 15, the elder substitutes this phrase with θανάτου (v. 14) and οὐκ ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον (v. 15). Therefore, ἐν τῷ σκότει περιπατῶμεν would mean: "abiding in death" (3:14), "do not have eternal life abiding in that person" (3:14, 15) (Strecker 1996, 29; Baylis 1992, 215; see Perkins 1983, 631–641 for a discussion on κοινωνία in relation to "walking in light/darkness").

In 1:8 and 10 the elder says that no child of God can say ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔχομεν.[17] Perfection cannot be attained until God's children become like Jesus at his *parousia* (3:2). But the elder was also concerned that his opposition to sinless perfection could lead to misunderstandings among God's children. Therefore he adds: ταῦτα γράφω ὑμῖν ἵνα μὴ ἁμάρτητε (2:1). What the elder is saying here is that τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ also sin (1 John 1:8–10). In 1:9 and 5:17 he refers to this sin as ἀδικίας (NIV, "wrongdoing") and clarifies it in 5:17 as ἁμαρτία οὐ πρὸς θάνατον.

Vitrano (1987, 129) purports that it can be assumed that the mind of the elder here goes back to what he has expressed in 2:1–2. From these two verses it seems apparent that because τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ have a παράκλητος their sin is not πρὸς θάνατον. However, in the absence of such a παράκλητος, there is no hope. While Christ is the ἱλασμός (2:2) for the sins of the whole world, he is the παράκλητος only for those who believe that he is the Christ (5:1), the Son of God (5:5).

But the children of God *ought* to acknowledge[18] their sins;[19] and, if they do, God responds (1:9). The acknowledgement of sin brings into focus the two separate qualities in God's character (1:9): his faithfulness, and his righteousness (πίστος ἐστιν καὶ δίκαιος). God's saving action, in response to acknowledged sin, operates in two directions: forgiveness of sin and purification from "every kind of unrighteousness" (Smalley 1984, 32). The images are expressive; for sin is an offense which God expiates, and also a stain which he removes. The verb ἀφιέναι literally means "to release from legal or moral obligation or consequence, *cancel, remit, pardon*"[20] (Danker 2000, 156), and καθαρίζειν may mean "cleanse, purify from sin" (Danker 2000, 489). But the primary significance of this passage relates to the divine pardon that is available for every child of God who confesses sinful actions.

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[17] This the elder explains in 1 John 1:5–2:2 around a series of six conditional sentences. Each one concerns the place of sin in the life of the believer (see Baylis 1992, 220ff; Culpepper 1998, 256f ; Kim 1998, 121f; and Kenney 2000a, 20 for a discussion on this). Similar patterns are to be found in 1:7, 9 and 2:1–2.

[18] Westcott (1982, 23) may be right when he suggests that an element of public confession before others, as well as God, is involved, for elsewhere in the Johannine corpus the verb ὁμολογεῖν is used in the sense of open "witness" (see 2:23; John 1:20; Rev 3:5; cf. also Matt 10:32; Rom 10:9).

[19] Bultmann (1978, 21) refers to the fact that the confession of sin, as well as having fellowship with other Christians, belong together with walking in the light and characterizes the Christian's existence.

[20] Its background is forensic (cf. Luke 7:43, concerning release from debt) while in the LXX the verb is also used in a cultic setting (cf. Lev 4:20; 19:22).

However, those ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου (2:16; 4:5; also called τέκνα τοῦ διαβόλου) are without a παράκλητος, consequently their sin is ἁμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον[21] and has to be interpreted in the context of the epistle as a whole (cf. Vitrano 1987, 129), and relates to "lawlessness" (3:4, ἀνομία).[22] It appealed to the conventions of the day[23] and should be understood to be the sin of apostasy in deliberate and defiant

[21] By using reciprocals the elder effectively and dynamically describes sin in relation to its counterpart, salvation. The following is a list of reciprocals that occur in al three the Johannine epistles:

Texts	**σωτηρία side**	**ἁμαρτία side**
a) 1:6f	a) ἐν τῷ φωτὶ περιπατῶμεν	a) ἐν τῷ σκότει περιπατῶμεν
b) 2:3, 4	b) τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν	b) τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ μὴ τηρῶν
c) 4:2–6	c) πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ ὁμολογει . . . ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστε . . . πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας	c) πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ μὴ ὁμολογει . . . αὐτοὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου εἰσίν . . . πνεῦμα τῆς πλάνης
d) 4:12, 20	d) ἐὰν ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους	d) ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτου (μισῇ)
e) 1 John 2:23; 5:12; 2 John 9	e) ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ, οὗτος καὶ τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει	e) πᾶς ὁ προάγων καὶ μὴ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ θεὸν οὐκ ἔχει
f) 3 John 11	f) (μιμου) τὸ ἀγαθόν . . . ὁ ἀγαθοποιῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν	f) μὴ μιμοῦ τὸ κακὸν . . . ὁ κακοποιῶν οὐχ ἑώρακεν τὸν θεόν

These reciprocals echo the character of apostasy. This variety of perspectives relates to the doctrinal and ethical problems the Johannine community experienced due to the ψευδοπροφῆται. These formulas are used in order to define sin on doctrinal level as the denial of the Incarnation (1 John 2:23; 5:12; 2 John 7, 9), and on an ethical level to do evil (3 John 11), to hate brothers (and sisters) (2:11; 4:20) and not to obey God's commandments. These formulas also point out the seriousness of being guilty of these sins because the consequences are to be denied having eternal life/fellowship with God and Christ (οὐκ ἔχει τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν). This category of sin can be depicted as ἁμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον and excludes people from kinship in God's family.

[22] See Brown (1982, 399f) and Hills (1998, 286–299) for a thorough discussion on ἀνομία. "Lawlessness" can be defined from the immediate context as τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου (3:8). The people who commit this sin are referred to as τὰ τέκνα τοῦ διαβόλου (3:8, 10).

[23] Hills (1998, 298) defines ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία from a social perspective in the Johannine community. In a convincing discussion he points out that the meaning of ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία doubtlessly appealed to the conventions of the day. With varying degrees of interpretive usefulness it fits all three the proposed standard readings: "it speaks of the seriousness of sin; it reminds the community of the severe penalty already suffered by those who have left; and, for those with the education to spot it, it describes the metaphysical (or eschatological) dimensions of human wrongdoing." According to Hills, each of these interpretations is socially localized—each one has a place where it must have "made sense"—in the life and conduct of the community at that time. Therefore, ἀνομία should be interpreted with reference to the entire first epistle.

repudiation of faith (Dodd 1946, 136f), and relates to "live in darkness". They deliberately reject the Father and Son *doctrinally* (2:22). This rejection is evidenced by their *ethical* failure (2:3–4, 9, 10, 15) (Ward 1995, 237). This will increase as the *parousia* approaches and culminate when the "man of lawlessness" (2 Thess 2:3) appears.

In 3:8 it seems as if the elder contradicts what he had written previously about sin in the lives of God's children: ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστίν and Πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ, ὅτι σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ μένει, καὶ οὐ δύναται ἁμαρτάνειν, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται (3:9).

This is certainly no contradiction. The point the elder wants to make is that a person who is born of God cannot continue to live in sin because a new principle of life has been implanted in that person (Strecker 1996, 100). There must be an obvious change in the person's conduct. When a child of God follows Christ, (s)he will break with his/her sinful past (see 1 John 2:29; 3:3, 7, 10; Matt 7:18; Rom 6:7, 12)[24] (Ladd 1998, 663; cf. Von Wahlde 1990, 167ff for a thorough discussion).[25] According to the NT, being children of God certainly makes a difference in people's attitude towards acts of obedience *versus* acts of disobedience. It involves a reorientation—an orientation towards God and an orientation away from Satan and the world. The actions that result from that orientation must be interpreted and evaluated in light of that (re)orientation.[26] In situations where sin has been committed ignorantly or unwittingly, the elder encourages intercessory prayer (5:16) (Vitrano 1987, 130).

It is evident that the elder clearly distinguishes between sin inside and outside God's family: sin inside the family no longer leads to death for sinners because they have the only Son of God as their *paraclete*. Those still outside the family have no advocacy, therefore their sin is sin unto death.

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[24] Malatesta (1978, 246) points out that, if sin for the elder means a refusal to accept the revelation of love, which Jesus is, and therefore the refusal to love Jesus, the Father, who sent him, and the brothers for whom he came, then not sinning means loving devotion to the person of Jesus. Right relationships with the Father and with our brothers and sisters derive from a right relationship with Jesus.

[25] Porter (1997, 1098) states that in the argument of the letter the reality is stated before the ideal. The reality is stated in 1:8–10 and the ideal in 3:6 and 5:18.

[26] The above point of view on a particular orientation to sin is not peculiar to 1 John. It is a basic Christian doctrine which occurs throughout the NT. See Rom 6 and 8, where Paul's doctrine of sin and salvation is underlined.

6.2. *Faith As a Means to Salvation*[27]

It is only through faith that people can receive God's light and be born into the family of God. In 3:23 the elder gives a double command. The one objective in this command is to believe in Jesus as Christ (2:22; 5:1), as Son (2:23), as Son of God (4:15; 5:5), and as God incarnate (4:2; 2 John 7). In chapter 5 the elder develops this theological thought by showing that belief in Jesus as the Son of God and Christ (5:5–6; cf. 5:10, 13) leads to God's gift of life *through* him (5:11) and continuously *in* him (5:12–13; cf. v. 10*a*). Klauck (1991, 352) states:

> Ein kritisch-scheidendes Moment kommt mit dem Glauben ins Spiel. Der Glaube gibt Antwort auf die vorangehende Liebestat Gottes in Jesus Christus und ermöglicht so die Schaffung eines neuen Lebensraums, in dem Liebe alle Relationen beherrscht. Dem Schutz des Glaubens dienen das Bekenntnis und das Zeugnis, gestützt auf die Tradition und ihre geisterfüllte Interpretation.

Faith issuing in life is the general theme of 5:1–13. First, the elder regards orthodox belief in Jesus as an essential *condition* for living as children of God (the topic with which the elder deals in 3:1–5:13). Second, an undercurrent of *exhortation* is discernible in these verses. The elder wishes to reassure the children of God of the rightness of their belief and their consequent possession of eternal life (present and future), and wants to persuade them to maintain it constantly by actively living out this life.

Finally, the elder is well aware that the belief of God's children is practical in its *application*. He indicates this earlier in his letter (e.g. 2:10, 29; 3:14–18; 4:2–4, 7, 21), and again emphasizes it in this section (according to 5:5 belief in Jesus as Son of God implies conquest of "the world"). Moreover, in the concluding section of 1 John (5:14–21) the elder goes on to specify some of the ways in which faith may be expressed in daily Christian living. Hence, according to these epistles it is impossible to have true faith (walk in the truth [2 John

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[27] Not much is said about faith in these epistles. The elder uses the verb πιστεύω nine times (3:23; 4:1, 16; 5:1, 5, 10, 13) and the noun πίστις only once (5:4) (Filson 1969, 274 refers to ten). All these texts occur only in 1 John. The event word πιστεύω is often implied in the elder's frequent references to ἔχειν, μένειν and ὁμολογεῖν. This is due to the fact that he is writing to those in the community who are children of God and abide in what they have heard from the beginning. Then there is also the implication of "false belief" from the ψευδοπροφῆται (πλανώντων).

4; 3 John 3, 4]; walk in the light [1:7]; walk according to God's commands [2 John 6]; walk as Jesus walked [2:6]; abide in what they heard from the beginning [2:24]; abide in love [4:16]; abide in God [2:28]) and act wrongly (continue in sin or do evil deeds or hate one's brother). To live rightly is to show that the child of God has life or knows God (1 John 3:7, 10, 14), which the elder also attributes to true faith (Davids 1997, 369).

Thus, the use of πιστεύω shows that salvific faith involves full acceptance of Jesus' person as ὁ Χριστός and ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεου and his identity as Saviour. This doctrinal acceptance has the existential ethical implications of refraining from sinful acts and showing love for one's brother.

6.3. *New Birth As Entry into the Family of God*

In the second part of 1 John a key theme arises. Believers are referred to as ἐξ αὐτου (θεοῦ) γεγέννηται (2:29). 1 John, like the Gospel (John 3:3), speaks of entry into the family of God as a new birth, being begotten by God, having the seed of God implanted in his child's inner being (2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18). Here the elder uses language commonly used when speaking of family life to express Christian truths.

In 2:29, the elder probably prefers to use the phrase *ἐξ αὐτοῦ*[28] γεγέννηται as introduction to the sebsequent section where the theme τέκνα θεοῦ is introduced. The metaphorical language (figurative, Strecker [1996, 83]) used here cannot be easily interpreted in psychological terms. This is evident from the fact that another way of expressing the same truth is to speak of πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ (5:10), ὁ ἔχων τὸν υἱὸν (5:12), even as the Gospel (1:12) speaks of ἔλαβον αὐτόν (Jesus). In this context it seems as if the expression ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται in 2:29 expresses a close and intimate relationship that relates to "we walk in the light" (ἐν τῷ φωτὶ περιπατῶμεν, 1:7). Used metaphorically, the verb γεννάω serves to indicate a relationship that is comparable to a family relationship, i.e. that between a father and his child. Through their rebirth God's children enter into a new relationship; they become his children (3:1, 2, 10; 5:2). Paul sees believers as children of God, but by adoption rather than by new birth (Rom 8:15). However, in the new birth

[28] In all the other occurrences (3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18) the pronoun αὐτός is substituted by θεός. According to Haas, De Jonge and Swellengrebel (1972, 75) the pronoun here refers to God, as is clear from the next verse.

and the implanting of the divine seed, the elder clearly sees something more than a new relationship. It means, according to Ladd (1998, 664) that a new dynamic, a new power, has entered the human personality, which is confirmed by a change of conduct. A child of God has found a new orientation of his will—to do the will of God, to love and obey Him, to break with sin and to follow the path of righteousness.

In 2:29, the phrase ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται is linked with ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην. "To do right", or "to do what is right", is used here (and in 3:7, 10) in the sense of imitating Christ, who did what is right. This can also be compared with "walking in the light". Δικαιοσύνην is what is in accordance with the will of God. Thus πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην is the proof that ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται (2:29).

The same thought is expressed negatively in 3:9 and 5:18: Πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ, and positively in 5:4, where the consequence mentioned is νικᾷ τὸν κόσμον. In other passages (cf. 2:29; 4:7; 5:1) the child's behaviour is viewed not as the consequence, but as the proof of his/her being born of God.

The expression ὅτι σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ μένει (3:9) can best be interpreted metaphorically as a reference to the source of life, which God implants in his child (Haas, De Jonge and Swellengrebel 1972, 84). Thus, the point in 3:9 may be that God's seed is to be found in those He has chosen (ἐκλεκτῇ, 2 John 1), who have been born of Him (Lieu 1997, 35).

Not only are believers born of God and consequently called children of God; they are also referred to as ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. Strecker (1996, 83) relates these three expressions as follow: "If the 'children of God' are born of God, they are 'from God' (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ)." These images are used in close relation to one another in 3:10 and 5:18–19. From these two texts it is clear that more than *belonging to* or *coming from God* is meant; the phrase ἐκ τοῦ θεου,[29] in relation to these other two phrases (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται and τέκνα θεοῦ),[30] points to a divine origin. It is furthermore used as a strong affirmation—*the adherents of the elder are of God* (4:4, 6; 5:19).[31]

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[29] In John 8 Jesus' opponents do not listen to his word, which is the word of God, and consequently prove themselves to be not "of God", but of their father the devil.

[30] When the elder addresses his readers as "children" he uses different words—τεκνία (2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21) and παιδία (2:14, 18). In contrast, 2 and 3 John use only τέκνα (2 John 1, 4, 13; 3 John 4) for the community.

[31] This concept is more explicitly defined in Chapter 3. Still under the influence

6.4. *Life As an Existence in the Family of God*

Life in this new family is expressed as "eternal life". The agonizing scene at the cross in the Fourth Gospel, where Jesus entrusts his mother and "the disciple whom he loved" to each other, establishes the new family. Where the familial imagery had once referred to the family created by Jesus' call, opposed to the natural family of Judaism, the imagery is now used to refer to those who remained faithful to the message that had been passed down from the beginning of the family's existence (Achtemeier, Green, Thompson 2001, 546f).

In the symbolic narrative of 1 John, group orientation (κοινωνία) constitutes the socio-structural core.[32] Here, the pattern of the patriarchal family exists. The existence of obedient members is totally determined by their group adherence. If such group adherence and its corollaries are negated, the respective narrative structures will collapse. In 3:11–18, a deceitful brother's (Cain) anti-group behaviour is explained and denounced. This behaviour shows that such a person does not belong to the family, since members of the family care for one another (3:16f) and will certainly not harm one another. Family cohesiveness and corresponding loyalty will be manifested through "right" behaviour towards one another (3:10). In 1:6–2:2, the elder describes the problem of violating the conventions of such a family (group). If such a wrongdoer (ἁμαρτία) still claims to be a member of that particular family, confession is required (1:9), so that the relations within the family can be restored. The Father deals with such matters in cooperation with the παράκλητος, who acts on behalf of the family (2:1–2).

1 John 1:3–4 describes how a person is invited into κοινωνία with other members of the family (μεθ' ἡμῶν) and the Father and his μονογενῆ (4:9) Son. This is a spiritual family that supercedes, existentially and ethically, the physical family to which a person belongs. According to the elder a person lives spiritually while still on earth. This implies that a person exists in a different mode from being on earth—already

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of the story of Cain (3:12), "not to be of God" is reciprocally formulated as "to be of the devil" (3:8) or "of the evil one" (3:12). There are spirits that are of God and others that are not. The spirits not of God are τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου (4:3) or τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πλάνης (4:6). The parallelism here suggests a real symmetry between being of God and being of the devil (Lieu 1997, 39).

[32] I support Van der Watt's (1999, 148ff) point of view regarding this new life in the family of God.

possessing eternal life. This implies membership of another (spiritual) family. Supreme loyalty is owed to this spiritual family. To become part of such a family, a person needs to be born (γεννάν—2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18) into that family. Then, new birth into a new family reorientates a person's thinking and conduct. Living according to the demands of this new family, implies that the member must accept that (s)he certainly is a member of this new family. By accepting this new way of life, new rules and new values replace previous traditions, rules and values. This is what conversion comprises.

A question that arises: How can this new existence be experienced in a concrete way? God now lives with and in his children by way of the Spirit (3:24). The Holy Spirit is the one who applies to God's children the redemptive work of the Father and the Son (2:20). The Spirit witnesses to this truth (5:6a). The chief functions of the Spirit are those of illuminator (2:20), teacher (2:27), empowerer (3:24 in the context of obedience; 4:13, in the context of love),[33] confessor (4:2) and witness (5:7f) (cf. Kenney 2000a, 47). The Spirit becomes the guiding influence in the lives of God's children (2, 20–7; 5:7), influencing their conduct. It is the Spirit that influences and leads these children to act right (δίκαιος—2:29; 3:7, 12; cf. also 3:10), to walk just as Jesus walked (2:6). The Father takes care of his family through his Spirit. One should be cautious not to confuse all spiritual experiences as coming from the Spirit of God (4:1–2). The Spirit will give God's children knowledge (οἴδατε—2:20). Only God's Spirit will guide the believer in the truth (5:6) (see also Von Wahlde 1990, 126ff).

When people are born into the family of God, they should not only be what they are born to be, but should also live according to the tradition of that new family. The elder emphasizes the important role of the tradition in 1:1–4 (cf. also 2:24; 5:20). The children of God should follow this "Jesus tradition" in their daily life. Jesus' conduct and actions were inspired by God, who is described as love (4:16). This is why the life of a member of the family of God should be characterized by love (4:7–8; 3:16).

[33] Kenney (2000a, 47) points out that 1 John awards equal importance to the three themes of obedience (1:5–2:6; 2:29–3;10; 5:13–21), love (2:7–11; 3;11–18; 4:7–21), and belief (2:18–28; 4:1–3; 5:5–12).

7. Outcomes of Salvation

When people became part of God's family, as a result of their birth from God, major changes occurred in their lives. The picture of these children of God, concerning their change, is derived from analyses of status, and change in their social behaviour. In each of the three documents, the picture of these children (adherents of elder) is clearly contrasted with a similarly developed picture of those ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου (opponents of elder). Each epistle demonstrates the intent to persuade the reader/hearer to either become or to remain part of God's family (cf. Kenney 2000a, 117f).

7.1. *Salvation Described As a Change of Status*

The status of the adherents of the elder as τέκνα θεοῦ is emphasized in all three epistles (1 John 3:2; 2 John 1; 3 John 4), but in each, some tension is evident between the portrayal of God's children as *individuals*, related to God independently through personal faith, and the *corporate* dimension of this relationship to God. 1 John underlines the autonomy of the individual child of God (2:20, 27; 5:20), but qualifies this emphasis with the thematic development of the concept of fellowship with brothers (κοινωνία in 1:3; 4:6). This tension is recognized in 2 John 1, 7, 9 and 11, while references to individuals as members of God's family occur in vv. 1–6, 8, 10, 12 and 13. 3 John is the only Johannine letter that is clearly addressed to an individual (Ladd 1998, 665). Yet, the tension of the child of God's individual apprehension of truth versus its corporate realization is apparent. This is clear from the elder's alteration between references to Gaius as an individual (vv. 1, 2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13) and those that bind him to a family of God's children (vv. 3–8, 12, 14).

Emphasis upon election (ἐκλεκτῇ) appears only in 2 John 1. Only 3 John 14 refers to God's children as friends (φίλοι). 1 John 3:2 and 3 John 1 address God's children as beloved (ἀγαπητῶ). Kenney (2000a, 117) also points out that privileges attend the children of God in each of the epistles, though not necessarily the same privileges. For example, *knowledge* of God is emphasized only in 1 and 2 John. 2 John 8 is unique in its mentioning of *reward* (μισθός) for God's children, and it is only in 3 John 8 that God's children are referred to as co-workers (συνεργοί) in the *truth*. 1 John 5:20 emphasises the privilege of understanding (διάνοιαν).

7.2. *Salvation Described As a Change in Social Behaviour*

The obligations of the children of God in the family are spelled out in all three Johannine epistles and in each case contribute to an understanding of the behaviour of these children, which is associated with walking. 1 John 1:6 speaks of the right conduct as walking in the light, whereas 2 John 6 specifies the commandments as the sphere of walking, and 3 John 3 identifies truth as the sphere of behaviour (Kenney 2000a, 117).

The behaviour of God's children has to relate to the social behaviour (rules and values) of the family into which they are born. "Family life" implies specific ethical conduct. Therefore, the elder insists upon a correspondence between internal state and external behaviour. The ἀγγελία correlates to ἐντολή. Gospel and commandment are but two aspects of a single revelation given in Christ (Kenney 2000b, 21). The rules of conduct are determined by the head of that family.[34] This conduct has to be imitated (2:6) and followed (2:17).

The highest claim believers can make for their lives is to claim fellowship with God, which implies that they have come to know the character of God (John 17:3), and that the character of God has become the transforming reality in their lives. In 1 John three definite statements are made about God's character: ὁ θεὸς φῶς ἐστιν (1:5), [ὁ θεὸς] δίκαιός ἐστιν (2:29) and ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν (4:8) (cf. Malatesta 1978, xvff; Culpepper 1998, 269). The conduct of God's children as a result of their kinship will now be discussed.[35]

7.2.1. *A Community Faithful to the Confession: God is Light*

In 1:5 the elder declares that ὁ θεὸς φῶς ἐστιν καὶ σκοτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία. Culpepper (1998, 257; see Malatesta [1978, 96ff] for a thorough discussion on light) points out that light is universally regarded as a quality of the divine character and that the holiness or goodness of God is intended. Those who would have fellowship with God (1:5–2:11) must therefore have nothing to do with σκοτία, which includes everything that is at enmity with God (Danker 2000, 932;

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[34] As theology dominates the Fourth Gospel (see Thompson 2001, 1ff), 1 John is also theocentric (cf. Lieu 1986, 198; cf. also Malatesta 1978, 96): it explores the nature of God's character.

[35] Compare Malatesta (1978), Von Wahlde (1990), Culpepper (1998), Kim (1998) and Kenney (2000a), who basically use the same structural division.

cf. Edwards 2000, 165). Several tests are pointed out and discussed by the elder with regard to having fellowship with God:

The first test for having fellowship with God—The danger of denying sin: The assumption drawn from the assertion that God is light was that since there is no darkness in God, there can be no darkness in his children. God's children cannot live in fellowship with their Father if their lives are darkened by sin. Moreover, they cannot deny the reality of sin, even among themselves, but have to confess their transgressions (1:8, 9; 2:1, 2) when they do sin (1:7, 9; 2:2) (cf. Von Wahlde 1990, 216; Kenney 2000a, 21).

The second test for having fellowship with God—Obey His command: The elder says that to truly know God, his children must keep his commandments. In this pericope (2:3–10), three central affirmations occur: ἐγνώκαμεν αὐτόν (2:3a), ἐν αὐτῷ μένειν (2:6a), ἐν τῷ φωτὶ εἶναι (2:9a). The tests attached to these affirmations, τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν (2:3b), αὐτὸς [οὕτως] περιπατεῖν (2:6c), ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτου (2:10a), have to be understood as a progressive unfolding of the underlying truth in God's children. These ethical exhortations, proceeding from the context of Jesus as the means of fellowship (1:6–2:2), culminate in the necessity (ὀφείλει) of imitation (καθὼς ἐκεῖνος) of Christ (Kenney 2000a, 22; cf. also Von Wahlde 1990, 217).[36]

The third test for having fellowship with God—Love for the Father versus love for the world: In 2:12–14, the elder proclaims the blessings of the gospel. In each affirmation there seems to be an implicit command; calling God's children to be (imperative) what they are (indicative). If forgiveness (ἀφέωνται) of sins, knowing (ἐγνώκατε) God, abiding (μένει) of God's word in them, and victory (νενικήκατε) over evil are ascribed to these children, they should act in accordance with these properties. Therefore, 2:15–17 could be best explained, according to Johannine dualism, as an admonition not to backslide into the sphere of the world (Von Wahlde 1990, 217; Kenney 2000a, 24f). Therefore, the elder invites God's children to walk (περιπατεῖν) as Jesus walked (2:6), for Jesus did the will of God who sent him (John 4:34; 6:38) (Brown 1982, 327).

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[36] In 2:7–11, the elder discusses his exhortation to keep God's commandments (2:3, 4). The one who fails to love his brother, abides in the darkness, walks in darkness, does not know where he is going and is blind. This is the opposite of knowing the Father (Kenney 2000a, 22). Kenney (2000a, 23) points out that in these first two units the focus falls on Jesus as the model of holy living. Here we find a theology of Jesus as the expiatory means (1:5–2:2) and an exemplary model (2:3–11).

The fourth test for having fellowship with God—Combat the heresy among you: To combat heresy the elder reminds God's children of two aids, namely the Spirit and the Word. The children of God received a χρῖσμα (2:20), which is probably an assurance that they have been anointed by the Spirit. The elder exhorts these children to hold fast to (μείνῃ) ὃ ἠκούσατε ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς (which refers to the "word") (Von Wahlde 1990, 217f). Only the Spirit will guide the children of God to know the truth[37] (Culpepper 1998, 262).

7.2.2. *A Community Faithful to the Confession: God is Righteous*
In 2:29, God is depicted as δίκαιός ἐστιν. The appeal by the elder ποιεῖν τὴν δικαιοσύνην leads to a clear distinction between τέκνα θεοῦ and τέκνα τοῦ διαβόλου. Consequently, he provides the children of God with a few benchmarks or standards ποιεῖν τὴν δικαιοσύνην:

The First Benchmark of Doing Right: Avoid sin. The elder has recognized the continuing presence of sin in the lives of these children as well as the danger of assuming that a child of God no longer needs to be concerned about sin. They are reminded that those who abide in Christ and have the Spirit abiding in them will lead lives characterized by righteousness (2:29) rather than sin (Culpepper 1998, 263ff) and ἁγνίζει ἑαυτόν, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος ἁγνός ἐστιν (3:3) (cf. Von Wahlde 1990, 218).

The Second Benchmark of Doing Right: Love one another.[38] The elder emphasizes the importance of exemplary love among God's children within the Christian community. Those who know Christ and practise love μεταβεβήκαμεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωήν (Culpepper 1998, 170). They can be assured that they abide in God and God abides in them (cf. Thomas 1998, 374). This leads the elder to refer to the example of Jesus' sacrificial love (3:16).

The Third Benchmark of Doing Right: The testing of spirits. In 1 John 4:1–6, the elder encourages the community to test the spirits because

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[37] The truth (ἀληθεία) concept is also present in each of the Johannine epistles, but the adherents' obligation with regard to the truth is portrayed in various ways: 1 John uses the language of believing, whereas 2 and 3 John simply utilize the metaphor of walking in the truth.

[38] Verses 13–18 refer to the specific requirements of the love command. Verses 19–22 give the assurance that the believers who live by God's commandments need not to fear God's judgment. Verses 23f conclude the section by confirming that those who obey his double command of "faith in his Son Jesus Christ and love for one another" will abide in God.

there are many false voices. Two criteria are mentioned here for distinguishing the true prophets from the false ones: the content of their message (ὁμολογεῖ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα) and their reception by the world (Von Wahlde 1990, 219; see Hiebert [1989a, 420–436] for a detailed discussion).

7.2.3. *A Community Faithful to the Confession: God is Love*

Love comes from God and is rooted in faith:[39] All who practise love for others show that they have come to know something about the character and nature of God. They are living in response to God's love as His children. Jesus is not only our example, but is the one who, by his example, brings the ability (γεγέννηται—4:7) to imitate him (Kenney 2000a, 32). In verses 4:13–16a, the elder points out that faith in Jesus is the response to God's love which enables the community to practise love for one another (Culpepper 1998, 270; also Kenney 2000a, 33).

Faith in the Son of God is the root of love: The elder states (5:1–4)[40] that believing is related to the imperative to love. The person who lives in fellowship with God will inevitably love others who share in this fellowship. Confessions of love for God can be true only when they are accompanied by obedience to God's commands.

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[39] Scholer (1990, 309) refers to πιστεύω and ἀγάπη as the two criteria by which true membership in the Johannine community is determined: a) believing in the name of Jesus Christ who is the Son of God (3:23; 5:1, 5, 10, 13) or confessing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (2:22–23; 4:2–3, 15); and b) loving one another (3:11, 23; 4:7, 11–12, 20–21). These two criteria are brought together in 3:23–24.

[40] Previously discussed themes are brought together (Culpepper 1998, 271; Edwards 2000, 171): belief in Christ and obedience to the love command are linked. But to "believe" also links with to be "born of God" which links the Christocentric and theocentric lines of salvation. Even in verses 5:11f, the "eternal life" theme is introduced. But the theme of faith seems to serve as the unifying theme for this section. Of the nine occurrences of the verb πιστεύειν in 1 John, five are in these few verses.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SOTERIOLOGY IN THE APOCALYPSE OF JOHN

Jan A. du Rand
University of Johannesburg

1. Introduction: The Apocalypse As Meaningful Narrative

A proper understanding of the function and meaning of the soteriology of the Apocalypse requires a thorough interpretation of the book as a whole. In this regard Robert Mounce states: "It is difficult to say what anything means until one has decided in a sense what everything means" (1998, xiii).

The narrative of the Apocalypse is to be read as a theological journey of faith, reflecting the circumstances of an apocalyptic prophet and a besieged community at the end of the first century (Du Rand 1991, 213). The theological flow of the narrative reaffirms the community's experience of their own identity and their place in God's meaningful present and future plan. This experience, in which the concept of salvation plays a pivotal role, is socially understood and applied to everyday life. Insight into their salvation brought perspectives to the first historical readers, which determined their present and future expectations.

Initially, a general description of what soteriology comprises will be set in place. Soteriology depicts the transformation of existence and life circumstances, affecting mankind and cosmos. Applied to the Apocalypse of John, particular questions are to be answered in reaching a valid definition of soteriology: What is the possible provocation that could lead up to the need for salvation? Who took the initiative and by what means was salvation accomplished? What are the consequences flowing forth from salvation? Does the scope of salvation, according to the Apocalypse, only consist of redemption or should judgement be incorporated as part of the process? To what extent will the outcome of the research on the meaning and function of salvation be influenced by a viewpoint on the genre and purpose of the Apocalypse?

Wilfred Harrington emphasises the very first characterisation of Jesus Christ in the Apocalypse (Rev 1:5) as his point of departure, concerning a definition of soteriology: Jesus is the one "who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood" (λύσαντι ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ). This concept is repeated in Revelation 5:9: ". . . because you were slain and with your blood you purchased (ἠγόρασας) men for God . . ." (1995, 54). To Harrington the focal point of the soteriology of the Apocalypse lies in the decisive victory of the Lamb by being slain on the cross (1995, 55). John McIntyre's views relate to Harrington's on the definition of soteriology in the Apocalypse (1992, 2). However, he notices that in the Apostle's Creed, the forgiveness of sins, which is an integral part of soteriology, seems to be more associated with the Holy Spirit and not explicitly with the death of Christ (1992, 3). Mary Solberg defines soteriology as liberation in the Apocalypse within the framework of an "epistemology of the cross" (1997, 14). From the survey, thus far, it becomes more and more clear that the Lamb's death and Christ's victory are functioning in the same semantic field according to the Apocalypse. And further, soteriology not only involves salvation or redemption, but also liberation. Greame Goldsworthy elaborates on this point by defining soteriology as "the gospel" of the Apocalypse (1984, 41). Liberation from tribulation in this age spells the pivotal meaning of soteriology. He takes Revelation 7:14 as point of departure to prove his view: ". . . they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (NIV). The apocalyptic eschatology in the Apocalypse is shaped and given its significance by soteriology (Goldsworthy 1984, 42).

An exciting contribution comes from Christopher Rowland (1997, 181–191). He compares soteriology in the Apocalypse (focusing particularly on chapters 13, 15 and 18) with the judgement scene, described in Matthew 25:31–46. The identity of the "insiders" and "outsiders" in the divine economy is compared to the sheep and goats, according to Matthew 25 (1997, 181; cf. Sweet 1996, 165). The "mystery of salvation" in the Apocalypse lies in the evocative power of its symbolic language, compelling imaginative participation (Rowland 1997, 182; Schüssler Fiorenza 1991, 31).

The way one understands the human predicament necessarily determines one's interpretation of soteriology. For the purpose of orientation, the traditional theological view (particularly among evangelicals) has been that all humans are sinful, by nature and choice and

therefore need divine forgiveness, transformation and restoration (Erickson 1995, 263). In such a view, the total depravity of man is emphasised. This view has fallen into disrepute in the twentieth century because of a belief in the moral improvement of humanity. With the crumbling of the modernistic world—and life view, making more and more room for postmodern views, the optimism about the excellence of human nature has come into question. Thus, a return to the earlier view of radical guilt and corruption of mankind and world is obvious, particularly among evangelicals (Erickson 1995, 264; 1991, 561). This has lead to the recent interpretation of the need for a forensic justification of the sinner by God, stressing a supernatural transformation. Therefore, soteriology is expressing a more holistic understanding of sin and salvation. In that sense, the social application of salvation has become even more important. Such an observation serves as a point of departure when reflecting on soteriology in the Apocalypse of John, where salvation takes particular humane and cosmological dimensions. The One who sits on the throne is both creator and redeemer.

Another important aspect to take into consideration is one's understanding of the genre and purpose of the Apocalypse. A meaningful sensitivity to the apocalyptic format, symbolism, content and vocabulary is the *sine qua non* of satisfactory interpretation (Mounce 1998, xiv; Efird 1989, 12). If interpreters consider the Apocalypse of John to be an apocalypse, there may still be different views of the conventions that constitute apocalypses. For example, if one assumes the Apocalypse to be literature of the oppressed that combines revelation with the promise of restoration and reversal, the outcome of the research will highlight those particular aspects (Linton 1991, 183; Sanders 1983, 447–459). If one assumes that an apocalypse is a revelation of heavenly mysteries, then the mystical and revelatory aspects will influence one's views on soteriology (Rowland 1982, 17). If one argues that an apocalypse is a flight from history into a cosmic vision of divine deliverance, due to a pessimistic view of reality, then elements supporting this view will spring to the foreground concerning soteriology (Hanson 1979, 64; cf. Linton 1991, 183). Others, who take apocalyptic to be a reflection of the hope for transcendence of death for the oppressed, will concentrate on visions of the afterlife in terms of salvation (Collins 1974, 5–22). Some interpreters who depart from a sociology-of-knowledge approach to apocalyptic see in the Apocalypse of John an alternative symbolic universe to be downplayed to the

historical real world. This view highlights its unfolding as a story in which the suffering of the righteous makes sense (Barr 1998, 4).

The Apocalypse can also be interpreted as an apocalyptic writing in dramatic narrative format, which wishes to encourage recent believers with the theological commitment to acknowledge God's rule on earth as it is already recognised in heaven (Du Rand 1997, 69). The believers' identification with the apocalyptic symbolic universe puts the suffering of everyday life into perspective. In such a view, soteriology gives meaning to the present and the future. Salvation is not to be seen as an escape from this world to a different plane, but a meaningful engagement on social level. In such a perspective, functionally engages theology, Christology and eschatology.

From a rhetorical point of view, the Apocalypse has definite affinities with the epideictic style. Epideictic endeavours to affect the reader's view, opinion and values on an issue like soteriology. The reader is convinced to hold a favourable view towards John's views on salvation but a negative stance towards the Roman authorities (Royalty 1997, 601). Soteriology really comes into focus when it is presented with vivid description (*ekphrasis*) or with comparison to something else (*synkrisis*) like the abominable Babylon over against the climax of salvation in the new Jerusalem. Soteriology according to the Apocalypse is best understood within the framework of "polemical parallelism" (Barnett 1989, 117), known as the mirroring motif, which means that evil is described mimicking God and his allies. The beast with the ten horns and seven heads and a deadly wound that has been healed (Rev 13:1–3) mimics the Lamb of God who was slain with his seven horns and seven eyes (Rev 5:6–7). The climax of *ekphrasis* and *synkrisis*, description and comparison, is particularly told in chapters 17–18 and 21–22, the judgment of Babylon and the marriage of the Lamb and the bride, the new Jerusalem.

2. The Soteriological Presentation in the Structure of the Apocalypse

An investigation into the existing presence of soteriology in the Apocalypse can be categorised in two ways: The typical soteriological terms that characterise soteriology (Marrow 1990, 269) and the semantic field of soteriology in the theological unfolding of the narrative of the Apocalypse.

2.1. *Terminological Occurrences*

Of the so-called typical soteriology terms, only σωτηρία, ἀγοράζω and λύω are found.

2.1.1. *The word group σῴζω, σωτηρία only occur three times in the noun σωτηρία*

Rev 7:10 A great multitude in white robes, holding palm branches in their hands, cried out loudly:
"Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb."
(ἡ σωτηρία τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν τῷ καθημένῳ ἐπὶτῷ θρόνῳ καὶ τῷ ἀρνίῳ)

Rev 12:10 After the hurling down of Satan a loud voice in heaven says:
"Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ."
(ἄρτι ἐγένετο ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ)

Rev 19:1, 2 A great multitude in heaven shouts:
"Hallelujah!
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for true and just are his judgments."
(ἀλληλουϊά· ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν, ὅτι ἀληθιναὶ καὶ δίκαιαι αἱ κρίσεις αὐτοῦ)

Observations

- In all three instances σωτηρία belongs to God. God is the ultimate cause of σωτηρία.
- Each one of the three verses is poetically clothed in hymnal style. And in every case the voice comes from heaven, praising God.
- In each case, God is praised because of his salvation accomplished: The *redeemed in heaven* praise God for his salvation in the *great tribulation*, after washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb (Rev 7:14). After the *war in heaven* in which Satan and his angels were hurled on the earth, the heavenly redeemed praise God for the victory, mentioning "the authority of his Christ" (Rev 12:7–10). In the third instance, God is praised after the downfall of Babylon (Rev 18:1–10:8).

- In all three occurrences σωτηρία is used with the undertones of victory. God is praised for the victories over evil, Satan and Babylon. Victory by the sacrifice of the Lamb is a recurring motif in the Apocalypse (Rev 5:9, 12). According to Revelation 7:10, the deliverance for which God is praised stands for everything over against the blessedness portrayed in verses 15–17 of the same chapter (Mounce 1998, 162). It is salvation from sin and all its dire consequences (Ellingworth 1983, 444), God's σωτηρία as victory in Revelation 7:10; 12:10 and 19:1 carries the Old Testament idea of victory (Exod 14:13, 30; 15:2; Ps 74:12; 106:10, 21). The verb νικαάν which occurs seventeen times in the Apocalypse, with Christ as the subject (cf. Rev 5:5), means that He conquered through his death (Aune 1998, 702).
- An important aspect highlighted in these occurrences of σωτηρία is that God's deliverance also includes his judgement as part of the soteriological process. God's judgement is executed over evil, Satan (Rev 12:7–9) and Babylon (Rev 18:1–24).
- The three occurrences of σωτηρία in the Apocalypse are found in confessional doxologies, praising God for his deliverance.

2.1.2. The word group ἀγοράζω in a soteriological sense occurs in Rev 5:9 and 14:3, 4. In Rev 5:9 it is stated in a doxology that the Lamb is worthy to take the scroll because he was slain ". . . and with your blood you purchased (ἀγοράσας) men for God." The Lamb is worthy because he was slain (historical fact of salvation), he purchased men for God (interpretation of historical fact) and he made them to be a kingdom and priests (the consequence of the historical fact). With his death on the cross, the Lamb did not pay Satan to redeem his people but he satisfied the justice of God (Beale 1999, 359; Kistemaker 2001, 210).

Revelation 14:3 and 4 contain ἀγοράζω in the same soteriological usage: The 144 000 who had the Lamb's as well as his Father's name on their foreheads are said to be "redeemed (ἠγορασμένοι) from the earth" (Rev 14:3). They were "purchased (ἠγοράσθησαν) from among men and offered as first fruits to God and the Lamb" (Rev 14:4). Both occurrences state the consequence of the Lamb's death, namely, the full count of God's redeemed. The thematic and structural similarities between Rev 14:1–5 and 7:1–17 are obvious. In both the vision of 144,000 is mentioned as well as the mark of the seal of God (Aune 1998, 796). And in Rev 5:9, as well as in 14:3, 4, ἀγοράζειν is soteriologically directed towards God's salvation

of mankind through the slaughtering of the Lamb. A particular identity is attached to the 144,000, the redeemed full count, because of the death of the Lamb.

2.1.3. Of the six occurrences of the word group λύω in the Apocalypse, only Rev 1:5 can explicitly be connected to the meaning of salvation. It consists of a confessional doxology as part of the letter's *salutatio*. Christ is addressed as the one "who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood" (τῷ ἀγαπῶντι ἡμᾶς καὶ λύσαντι ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ). It contains the first doxology addressed to Christ the Lamb (cf. 4:11; 5:9, 12–13; 7:10). The redemption work of Christ is central to the rest of the eschatological drama (Mounce 1998, 49). Text critically the reading (λύσαντι = has freed) is to be preferred to the alternative reading of λούσαντι (has washed) because of superior manuscript evidence. Rev 1:5 describes the soteriological agenda of the Apocalypse. The ransom paid to redeem the faithful from sin is provided by God, the sacrificial death of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. By means of his death, the Lamb constituted his followers.

It is obvious from the applications of the word groups σωτηρία, ἀγοράζω and λύω in the Apocalypse that God is the initiating *origin* of salvation, Christ the Lamb's sacrificial death is the *means* through which the identity of the followers is constituted and that the believers are freed *from sin*.

2.2. *Further Semantic Survey*

The functional place of soteriology in the narrative of the Apocalypse of John does not only lie within the usage of particular soteriological terms but is rather interlaced in the theological thread of the story. Stanley Marrow discusses the vocabulary of soteriology in the New Testament in general and comes to the conclusion that the vocabulary ". . . remains at best an attempt—and ultimately, a vain one—to give expression to the ineffable love of God for sinful humanity" (1990, 280). When working through the twenty-two chapters of the Apocalypse of John from a soteriological point of view, one comes to the conclusion that soteriology is the deeper vein that gives life to theology, Christology, pneumatology, ecclesiology and eschatology.

The soteriological process according to the Apocalypse unfolds as follows: A distinction has to be made between the soteriological accomplishment and the soteriological consequences:

SOTERIOLOGICAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

- *God's creation in soteriological framework: chapter 4*
- *The soteriological role of the Lamb*: 1:5, 7, 13, 18; 2:8; 5:2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13; 6:2; 7:3, 10, 14, 17; 11:8; 12:1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11; 13:3, 8, 11, 12; 14:1, 3, 4; 15:6; 19:10, 11; 22:20.
- *The soteriological role of God's judgement*: 1:18; 6:2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 16, 17; 8:1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12; 9:1, 13; 10:2, 8, 9, 10; 11:13, 15, 18; 12:9, 10; 14:7, 8, 10, 16, 19; 15:5, 6, 7, 8; 16:1, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 17; 17:1, 2, 8, 16; 18:2, 8, 9, 10, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21; 19:2, 3, 11, 15, 19; 20:9, 10, 12, 14, 18.

SOTERIOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

- *Appropriation of salvation*: 2:7, 10, 11, 17, 26, 28; 3:4, 10, 12, 20, 21; 4:4; 6:9, 11; 7:13, 14, 17; 11:1, 3, 11, 12; 12:6, 11, 14, 16; 14:1, 3, 4, 5, 12, 13; 15:2; 17:14; 19:14, 19; 20:2, 4, 6, 12; 21:3, 4, 7, 27; 22:4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20.
- *Acknowledgement of God's rule on earth*: 1:5; 5:10; 11:15, 17; 12:5, 10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:1, 6, 15, 16; 20:4, 6.
- *Soteriological destination: new heaven and earth; marriage*: 19:7, 8, 9; 21:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 22, 23, 27; 22:3.

2.3. *Preliminary Observations*

From the viewpoint of the receivers of salvation, soteriology in the Apocalypse consists of the soteriological accomplishment which is made up of God's creation, the soteriological role of the Lamb and God's judgement, to finish off this division. The soteriological consequences arising from the accomplishment of salvation are the appropriation or application of salvation, the acknowledgement of God's rule on earth and the climax, described as a new destination and the marriage of the Lamb. The question may be asked how God's judgement fits into the scheme of the soteriological process. Judgement and salvation are seen as the two sides of the same soteriological coin.

An important part of the accomplishment of salvation is *God's creation*. Chapters 4 and 5 are neatly narrated in a parallel format. God is praised for the work of creation (chapter 4) and the Lamb for accomplishing redemption (chapter 5) (Carroll 1999, 253). Redemption builds onto creation. The theological link between creation and salvation lies in the eschatological judgement (cf. Rev 10:6; 14:7). God's

creation as instrument of divine justice is presented in the framework of the exodus motif. The old creation is on its way to the new creation, that is paradise restored in the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:1).

The *function of the Lamb* is the axis around which the narrative of the Apocalypse of John rotates. Jesus Christ is portrayed as a lamb to emphasise his role as the sacrificial offer who frees his followers from their sins with his blood. In the first three chapters Jesus is sketched like a human being (Rev 1:13), yet he speaks as if he is God (Rev 1:17), but at the same time, the one who died and rose (Rev 1:18). He is the heavenly revealer portrayed in Daniel (Rev 1:13–14), imaging power and control. In each of the letter messages Jesus is appropriately characterised.

In chapters 4–11, the picture of Jesus is focused to be "a Lamb standing as if it has been slaughtered . . ." (Rev 5:6). With his "seven eyes", Jesus fully possesses the Spirit of God, and with his "seven horns", he is the powerful ruler. To be slain and slaughtered carries the thrust of the characterisation of Jesus as Lamb. Through the Lamb's death, he victoriously constituted salvation. His blood freed his followers from sin (Rev 1:5) and purchased men for God (Rev 5:9). Salvation belongs to God and the Lamb (Rev 7:10). Christ's course of life spells out the story of salvation: his birth (Rev 12:1), slaughtering (Rev 5:6) and his triumph on mount Zion (Rev 14:1) being the three soteriological pinnacles. Those around the throne, the twenty-four elders, the two witnesses, the souls under the altar and the numbered and innumerable multitude are all told as followers of the Lamb. In the final stages of the narrative, salvation is more intensely identified as a victory by the blood of the Lamb (Rev 12:10–11). This victory is also linked with the image of the heavenly judge (Rev 19).

In the latter part of the Apocalypse (chapters 12–22), the Lamb constituted his followers as the 144,000 and the new Jerusalem as his bride. The focus falls on the redeemed followers, the functional effect of the work of the Lamb. The bride, the wife of the Lamb (Rev 21:9), is contrasted with the great harlot, symbolising the city of decadence. It is obvious that the story of salvation is embedded in the unfolding of the theological structure of the Apocalypse.

If salvation constitutes the one side of the soteriological coin according to the Apocalypse, the *judgement of God* is shown on the other side. Through the seven seals, seven trumpets and seven bowls God's judgement is visually narrated. The time has come for judging (Rev 11:18) because the accuser has been hurled down (Rev 12:9, 10). The

grapes of the earth's vine is harvested and trampled outside the city (Rev 14:18, 19), reaching its climax in the fall of Babylon (Rev 18). The grand finale of God's judgement after the war is the destruction of Satan, the beast, false prophet, death and Hades into the lake of fire. Judgement and salvation touches when it is said that the worshipper of the beast will be tormented with burning sulphur in the presence of the Lamb (Rev 14:10).

According to the survey, the soteriological consequences can be grouped as the appropriation of salvation, the acknowledgement of God's rule and climaxing in the new heaven, earth and the marriage.

Under the heading, *appropriation of salvation*, is understood the application of salvation to humanity and cosmos. The experience of the results of the accomplished salvation is directed towards the present or/and the future. Certainty about the future gives security in the present, seen within an eschatological framework. Approximately seventy percent of the occurrences are directed towards the future and the rest towards the present. In some instances, the soteriological consequences stretch from the present into the future.

First of all, the consequences directed towards *the future*: The followers of the Lamb or believers who hold fast to the victory/salvation brought by Jesus Christ will receive the right to eat from the tree of life (Rev 2:7); will receive the crown of life (Rev 2:10); will not be hurt by the second death (Rev 2:11); will receive some of the hidden manna as well as a white stone with a new name written on it (Rev 2:17); will receive authority over the nations (Rev 2:26); will receive the morning star (Rev 2:28); will be dressed in white, walking with Christ (Rev 3:4); will be kept from the hour of trial (Rev 3:10); will become a pillar in the temple of God (Rev 3:12); will feast with Christ (Rev 3:20) and will receive the right to sit with him on his throne (Rev 3:21). To be dressed in white, means to demonstrate salvation (Rev 3:4; 4:4; 6:11; 7:13, 14; 19:14). The Lamb will become the caring shepherd (Rev 7:17) and will gather with the 144,000 on Mount Zion to sing the new song (Rev 14:3). The redeemed that die in the Lord will have deserved rest (Rev 14:13). The called, chosen and faithful followers will overcome the enemies (Rev 17:14) and will follow the rider on the white horse (Rev 19:14). The beheaded will reign with Christ a thousand years and be given authority to judge (Rev 20:4). The redeemed will have part in the first resurrection while the second death has no power over them (Rev 20:6). They,

as priests of God and of Christ (Rev 20:6), will be the dwelling of God (Rev 21:3). Who overcomes, will inherit the new order of salvation where there will be no tears and death (Rev 21:4, 7). They will experience the realisation of God's covenant, to be his children in the full sense (Rev 21:7) because their names are written in the Lamb's book of life (Rev 21:27).

The consequences experienced in *the present* are the following: The redeemed followers of the Lamb are assured that they are God's possession and that God takes care of them (Rev 11:1). God undertakes the witnessing role of the two witnesses (the believing church, Rev 11:3, 11, 12). In the same way, God takes care of the Messianic mother (the church) who fled into the desert (Rev 12:6, 14). The redeemed overcome the accuser by the blood of the Lamb (Rev 12:11). The song of redemption that began with Moses finds its completion in the sacrificial death of the Lamb and is sung by the followers of the Lamb (Rev 15:2). John fell down to worship, after what he saw and heard (Rev 22:8, 9). Those who wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb to gain entrance to the tree of life, also have the right of entrance into the city (Rev 22:14). The redeemed are also living out of the expectation of the coming of the Lord Jesus (Rev 22:17, 20).

Whether the consequences of salvation are directed towards the future or the present, the redeemed are characterised as the followers of the Lamb and thereby received a particular identity. In the polarised unfolding of the narrative of the Apocalypse, this identification plays a dominant role in the present and future.

The *acknowledgement of God's rule on earth* is another soteriological consequence which has to be taken seriously. It runs like a golden thread through the apocalyptic narrative. Right at the beginning Jesus Christ is called the ruler of the kings of the earth (Rev 1:5). He made us to be a kingdom to serve God (Rev 1:5; 5:10). The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord . . . and he will reign forever and ever (Rev 11:15). God has already begun to reign (Rev 11:17). The born child will rule all the nations (Rev 12:5). Salvation has come and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ (Rev 12:10). God almighty is king of the nations (Rev 15:3) and the Lamb who overcomes is Lord of lords and King of kings (Rev 17:14). The salvation and power belong to God (Rev 19:1) who reigns (Rev 19:6). The rider on the white horse rules with

an iron sceptre and his name is King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16). The redeemed will reign with Christ for a thousand years (Rev 20:4, 6).

The relational connection between salvation, brought by the Lamb, and the consequence of acknowledging God and the Lamb's rule is obvious. Acknowledging God's rule on earth is a present consequence of salvation.

The climax of soteriological consequences, according to the Apocalypse, is without doubt *the marriage of the Lamb and the bride*, portrayed as the new Jerusalem, coming from God (Rev 21:1, 2). It is combined with the appearance of the new heaven and earth. The wedding of the Lamb and bride has come (Rev 19:7, 8, 9). The bride, the city, is prepared and clothed as a bride—she is the wife of the Lamb (Rev 21:2, 9). And in the new city the Lord God and the Lamb is the temple (Rev 21:22). The glory of God gives light to the city and the Lamb is its lamp (Rev 21:22, 23). Only those, whose names are in the Lamb's book of life, will enter the city (Rev 21:27). And so important, the throne of God and of the lamb is in the city (Rev 22:3). God who sits on the throne says: "I am making everything new" (Rev 21:5). The holy city Jerusalem in all its glory and brilliance comes from God (Rev 21:10, 14).

2.4. *Conclusive Observations*

The following conclusive observations have resulted from the survey of soteriology in the Apocalypse: *In the framework of hymns and worship.*

The majority of soteriological references are found in the setting of worship. The worship passages are closely bound up with the series of hymns and poetical glimpses in the Apocalypse. The purpose of this investigation is not to focus on the *topoi*, stylistic features, technical vocabulary, situations for which written or the stimulus in writing the hymns, but on the soteriological content and its functional role in the theological flow of the narrative.

The soteriological climax according to *Chapter 1* is without doubt the vision of "One like a Son of Man" (verses 9–20). It is preceded by a prologue (verses 1–3), bringing home a preview of what soteriologically "must soon take place", that is "the testimony of Jesus Christ", followed by the greeting (verses 4–5) in which God "who is and who was and who is to come" as the authoritative orientation of soteriology is introduced as well as the "seven spirits" and the

threefold description of Jesus Christ, the "faithful witness", "first born from the dead" and "the ruler of the kings of the earth". All three descriptions set up the Christological soteriological agenda. The doxology (verses 5–8) again, emphasises the threefold soteriological description of Jesus Christ: He "loves us" as the faithful witness; He "freed us from our sins by his blood" as "the firstborn from the dead" and He "has made us a kingdom as the ruler of the kings of the earth".

John's vision (verses 9–20) puts soteriology into the category of the so-called "high Christology". Jesus Christ is soteriologically positioned "among the lamp stands" as the "One like the Son of Man" (cf. Prigent 1988, 24). The worship that follows (verse 17–18), finishes off the soteriological agenda scene.

The *trisagion* in Rev 4:8, probably patterned like Isaiah 6:3, emphasises the transcendency and authority of God, the origin of creation and salvation (cf. Carroll 1999, 251). As prelude to the first series of judgements, the doxological hymns in chapters 4 and 5 (Rev 4:11; 5:9–10 and 5:12) serve to acclaim God or the Lamb as "worthy" to achieve salvation. It is told in the framework of worship (cf. Guthrie 1992, 76). The revelation of the portrayal of Christ in the Lamb figure is significant in view of the soteriological dominance of the Lamb in the remainder of the book. The Lamb is chosen to the lion-figure because of its soteriological sacrificial significance. The doxology in Rev 5:13 summarises the entire issue of soteriology: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. . . ." The reader is placed within an ideological framework, namely the sacrificial death of Christ (Du Rand 1991, 33).

The next hymn is a victory song in Rev 7:10. The redeemed are now before the throne and in front of the Lamb. The white robes witness salvation, and the palm branches are symbolic of their victorious worshipping. They acknowledge the King and show their indebtedness to Christ for salvation. Such a victory hymn gives direction to the narratological unfolding of salvation in the Apocalypse.

The worshipping celebration of salvation is continued in Rev 11:15, 17–18. Loud voices in heaven announce that "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ." This is a victorious announcement, followed by a mixture of thanksgiving and judgement in the next worshipping song (Rev 11:17–18). The reign of God and his Christ is directly linked to the process of salvation. This is further illustrated in the victory hymn in Rev 12:10–12. Salvation, power and the kingdom of God and the authority of his

Christ have been established. The victory over the accuser has been accomplished because of the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony (Rev 12:10, 11). More than once, the readers are reminded that God's salvation as process includes his justice, which implies judgement (Rev 12:12; cf. 11:18; 19:1–10).

Rev 14:1–5 can be characterised as a worship passage although it does not contain a hymn or a poetic format. It, nevertheless, echoes the hymn of the elders in Rev 5, focussing on the redeeming activity of the Lamb. The "new song" is a celebration of the soteriological meaning of the sacrificial death of the Lamb.

The song of Moses and the Lamb (Rev 15:3–4) is the next worshipping hymn celebrating soteriology in the Apocalypse. It forms part of the soteriological worshipping claim in the narrative. This worship scene is a prelude to the final events of judgement. This hymn can be classified as a doxology, consisting of an *acclamatio*, praising God's deeds and ways; a short *exhortatio*, to fear God and to glorify his name; and ending with a causal *doxology*, praising God's holiness and his accomplishments (Du Rand 1993, 327). By way of a rhetorical question in the middle part, the reader is participating in this doxological presentation. In the hymnal sections, the emphasis falls on what God has done, concerning salvation and judgement. The readers are reassured of their salvation, but the sense of the righteous wrath of God is unmistakeable. This is again underlined in the doxology of Rev 16:5–7, praising the holiness and justice of God in all his deeds.

The Hallelujah chorus in Rev 19:1–10 forms a fitting climax, leading to the new Jerusalem and the marriage of the Lamb. The situation is tumultuous worship in heaven. It is a spontaneous outburst of praise in climaxing celebration of the salvation and victory of God over evil. Celebrating salvation and victory is entirely God centred in the first Hallelujah (Rev 19:1–2). The second Hallelujah (Rev 19:3) is an exclamation of the first, stressing the finality of the destruction of evil. Pringent means that the first two Hallelujahs are shouted by Christians (1988, 278). The third Hallelujah (Rev 19:4–5) comes from the living creatures and elders in obeisance before the throne. The fourth Hallelujah (Rev 19:6–7) describes a victory song, glorifying the reign of God, announcing the climax of salvation, the marriage of the Lamb.

The theological axis around which the worshipping hymns rotate, is soteriological celebration of God and the Lamb's deeds, particu-

larly referring to the sacrificial death of the Lamb and the consequence for God's reign (Jörns 1971, 62). It is no ordinary worship, either in the temple, the synagogue or in a Christian congregation, but similar to the Merkabah mysticism of Jewish apocalyptic (cf. Ford 1998, 208; Scholem 1965, 42). Gruenwald describes the process of the mystical experience of the *Merkabah* vision (1980, 172). The mystic sits on a bench with ten chosen persons in front of him. Only the mystic, a sort of public emissary on behalf of the other mystics, can explain the throne vision and God's revelation (Ford 1998, 208; cf. Gruenwald 1980, 173). The scribe then writes down his words. The focus on salvation brought about by God is prominent. Similarly, John is told to share his experience in front of the throne with the seven churches. In such a way, they participate through celebrating hymns and worship in salvation.

Another general conclusion to be mentioned, according to the survey, is the relationship between *creation, salvation and judgement*. Sibley Towner writes about the relationship between creation and apocalyptic hope as God's gracious activity with human partnership (1996, 29; cf. Carroll 1999, 251).

The parallel between creation and redemption in the foundational throne scene described in Rev 4 and 5 speaks for itself. Parallel hymns of praise are addressed to God (Rev 4:11) and to the Lamb (Rev 5:9–10, 12). This theological relationship is structurally confirmed in the parallel between chapters 4 and 5. If the four living creatures (Rev 4:6–9; 5:8) symbolise the created cosmos (Beale 1999, 329) and were joined by the twenty four elders in praising God for his creation (Rev 4:11), the same grouping sang a "new song" to praise the Lamb because he was slain . . . to purchase men for God. And according to Rev 10, eschatological judgement and creation are linked when the voice from heaven "swore by him . . . who created the heavens . . ." and said: "There will be no more delay" (Rev 10:6). In Rev 14:7 the imagery of imminent judgement, divine creation and worship are related when the angel says that the hour of God's judgement has come: "Worship him who made the heavens. . . ."

God's creation, salvation and justice or judgement, are closely aligned in the Apocalypse. In the cycles of sevens, depicting God's judgement (the seals, trumpets and bowls), the created cosmos is a key player (Carroll 1999, 253). God's creation is the instrument of his justice. The relationship between creation and judgement is typically illustrated in memories of the exodus from Egypt in which the

plagues in Egypt play a prominent role (Rev 6:8, 12–14; 8–9; 16). On occasions creation also plays a prominent part in the soteriological process: The Lamb will shepherd his own and springs of water will nourish them (Rev 7:16–17). The desert provides shelter and nourishes the Messianic mother and her child (Rev 12:16). And the earth comes to the woman's aid and devours the flood waters (Rev 12:16).

Divine victory as judgement is spelled out when "the accuser has been hurled down" (Rev 12:9). Anyone worshipping the beast will be judged in the presence of the Lamb (Rev 14:10). Judgement and salvation form the two sides of the same soteriological coin, according to the Apocalypse. This is illustrated when the rider on the white horse, by interpretation Jesus Christ the saviour, acts as a judge, according to Rev 19:11.

The survey also indicates the dominant role of *the Lamb* in the soteriology of the Apocalypse. The title Lamb occurs no fewer than 29 times (Morton 2001, 89), whereas Jesus Christ occurs only seven times and Christ four times (Ford 1998, 215). John's use of the title "Lamb" even shows a particular pattern in the structure of the narrative. It functions as the key issue and occurs mainly in the worship passages (Guthrie 1981, 64). Whether "the Lamb" is to be identified with the lamb of Isaiah 53:7 (Charles 1920, 48); with the warrior ram of the Enochic *Animal Apocalypse* (Dodd 1953, 27), with the Passover Lamb (Roloff 1993, 37), or the Akedah ram or the atoning sacrifice (Farrer 1964, 17), or with the servant (Barker 1995, 92), the agent through which God accomplishes salvation stands in the centre of soteriology in the Apocalypse.

After the ascription of praise to God as creator in chapter 4, there is a dramatic interlude. The delay has the dramatic effect of focussing on the introduction of the Lamb in the *first worship passage* (cf. Beasley Murray 1974, 120). In the introduction, the Lamb is first referred to as a lion (Rev 5:5). The striking or unexpected contrast between a lion and a lamb emphasises the soteriological function of Christ. The Lamb who is worthy to take the scroll, is slain to purchase men for God (Rev 5:9). The Lamb in this first worship scene in chapter 5 is the representation of redemption as an accomplished act. The agent through which God achieves victory and salvation is a symbol of sacrifice.

The worship scene (Rev 5) is followed by the *first judgement* passage in chapter 6. It is the Lamb that opens the first six seals. The Lamb

is the initiator of the first series of judgements (Guthrie 1981, 65). God's judgement and salvation work through the Lamb (Rev 6:16). In the *second worship* passage (Rev 7:9–17), the great multitude is standing before the Lamb and the throne. The emphasis falls on the redemptive purpose of the Lamb (Rev 7:14). But the Lamb is also described as a shepherd (Rev 7:17). This functions as an encouragement just prior to the blowing of the trumpets and further judgements.

In the *second judgement* sequence and *third worship* passage (Rev 8:1–11:19), the title Lamb is not found. The message of salvation is carried by the symbolic measuring of the temple and the worshippers (Rev 11:1). Christ is mentioned in Rev 11:15 when the voices in heaven announce that "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" has arrived. A similar announcement comes from a heavenly voice, according to Rev 12, after the victory over Satan in heaven: Salvation and God's reign have arrived and "they overcome him (the accuser) by the blood of the Lamb" (Rev 12:11).

The *fourth worship* passage sketches the Lamb and the 144 000 standing on Mount Zion. The 144 000 are twice described as those who had been redeemed through the act of the Lamb (Rev 14:1–5). The 144 000 find their identity in the sacrificial act of the Lamb, being mentioned three times in this passage.

The *fifth worship* passage (Rev 14:6–15:8) is preceded by the solemn announcement that God's judgement will unfold before the angels and the Lamb (Rev 14:10). In the worship sequence which follows, those who have conquered the beast sing a hymn of praise, called the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb (Rev 15:3–8). The readers are reminded of God's intervention on behalf of his people (Guthrie 1981, 69). The Lamb is identified with God in the final victory. In the climax passage of the judgement scenes (Rev 16–18) we find two references to the Lamb in Rev 17:14. The Lamb will conquer the kings and their armies because he is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, a typical description of Christ at the parousia (Rev 19:16). The triumph of the Lamb is contrasted to the utter destruction of Babylon (Rev 18).

The *sixth worship* passage (Rev 19:1–10) recalls a heavenly scene in which God is praised in a fourfold Hallelujah, the last one announcing the climax of salvation, the marriage of the Lamb. In the following section, about the parousia and the great white throne (Rev 19:11–20:15), Christ is mentioned, but not with the functional title Lamb. He is rather the warrior who deals with the enemies.

In the final section, about the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:1–22:5), the Lamb is mentioned seven times. The new Jerusalem is the wife of the Lamb (Rev 21:9). The names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are on the twelve foundations (Rev 21:14). The Lamb and the Lord Almighty are the temple of the new city (Rev 21:22) and we read about the throne of God and the Lamb in the new city (Rev 22:1, 3). God and the Lamb are the light of the city (Rev 21:23). The register of the members of the city is called the Lamb's book of life (Rev 21:27).

The Lamb is God's key to salvation and judgement. Mostly in the worship scenes, in heaven and on earth, the Lamb is praised for his sacrificial death as well as being the King of kings. God established his reign through the powerful, slain Lamb. The judgement is an indispensable part of the account of the Lamb's victory.

2.5. *A Soteriological Structure?*

The criterion used to divide the Apocalypse into a particular structure will eventually decide the end result. In other words, each interpreter brings to the table a unique set of stylistic and presuppositional criteria which find expression in the ultimate outline of the book. But, why then try to draw to an outline? Although any outline will be subjective, at least, it gives the interpreter a better grip on the material, a framework of reference and a working basis to draw further contours; whether it be external criteria, like Old Testament symbolism (Glasson 1965), liturgical patterns (Läuchli 1960), Greek drama (Bowman 1955), based on the imperial games (Stauffer 1955), using symbols (Farrer 1949) or structuralist techniques (Schüssler Fiorenza 1977), to name but a few. Others determine structure based on internal criteria, like the ceptenary or related approaches (Lohmeyer 1960), content analysis (Swete 1921), recapitulation (Caird 1966), chiastic patterns (Schüssler Fiorenza 1977), cycles of visions (A Collins 1976), hearing formulas and visions (Beale 1997), apocalyptic literary conventions (Smith 1994) and narratological repetition (Barr 1984), to choose the most prominent approaches.

Taking the Apocalypse as a dramatic narrative, interpreted from a soteriological viewpoint, the content on the level of symbolic action can be divided into the following three acts (Du Rand 1997, 312):

Act 1: Rev 1–3:	Soteriological application to the church
Act 2: Rev 4–11:	Soteriological unfolding of salvation and judgment in the cosmos
Act 3: Rev 12–22:	Soteriological fulfilment in history

As soteriological point of departure, I have taken Rev 1:5, 6 as orientation in Act 1: "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom. . . ." The framework in which Act 1 can be read is the communication between the Triune God and the believers (church) on the basis of the salvific work of Christ. Christ is not only portrayed as saviour but also as judge. The church, represented in the seven letter messages, has to hold onto the salvation and victory already wrought by Christ.

Act 2 sketches the effect of God's salvation and judgment, unfolding in the cosmos. It opens with a vision of the heavenly court in which God is praised as creator (Rev 4) and the emphasis falls on the functional soteriological role of the Lamb (Rev 5). Only the Lamb is worthy to open the scroll because he guarantees salvation by his sacrifice. The opening of the scroll leads to the seven seals of judgement. The fifth seal records the cry of the souls under the altar, which takes up a prominent role in the rest of the Apocalypse. The question: ". . . and who can stand?" (Rev 6:17), is followed by the salvific sealing of the believers (Rev 7:1–8) and the scene of the triumphant heirs of Christ's work of salvation in heaven (Rev 7:9–17). The seven trumpets of judgement reminds of the ten plagues in Egypt, introducing the salvific exodus of God's people (Rev 8–9). Before the seventh trumpet a series of symbolic enactments illustrate salvation (Rev 10–11). John has to eat the scroll (Rev 10:1 ff), measure the temple and the worshippers, symbolising God's salvific protection. The two witnesses proclaim the message of salvation and judgement (Rev 11). On the grounds of Christ's work of salvation, the witnesses (and believers) are revived. This act closes with the affirmation of God and Christ's place and role in the cosmos.

Act 3 describes the unfolding of judgement and salvation in history. It starts with the birth of the "male child" (Rev 12:1–6) and the setting of the contrasts between the Triune God and the demonic trio (Rev 13). The Lamb and the redeemed multitude on mount Zion sing the new song of salvation (Rev 14:1–5). The execution of judgement is symbolically enacted through the imagery of harvesting

the wheat and the grapes (Rev 14:14–20). However, the bowls of judgement are poured out (Rev 15–16). First of all, the song of the Lamb, mediator of salvation, is sung (Rev 15:1–4).

Babylon is destroyed (Rev 17–18), after which the rider on the white horse executes his task as judge (Rev 19:11–21). The Hallelujah-chorus praises God for his salvation and judgement (Rev 19:1–10), announcing the climax of salvation, the wedding of the lamb (Rev 19:7). The two beasts and Satan are defeated and the believers reign with Christ (20:1–6). The final execution of judgement before the great white throne is to be a formality for those whose names are in the book of life (Rev 20:11–15). The act closes with John's vision of the new heaven and earth, depicting the final destination of salvation. The believers experience complete fellowship with God and the Lamb (Rev 21–22). In contrast with the epitome of God's judgement—the destruction of Babylon—stands the epitome of God's salvation—the marriage of the Lamb and the new Jerusalem. This act finally closes with the return of Christ after it has begun with the first coming of Christ (cf. 22:6–20 with 12:1–7).

The three acts are soteriologically determined.

3. Some Situational Perspectives and Socio-Scientific Relief

3.1. *Social Crisis and Persecution?*

Socio-scientific perspectives on the Apocalypse of John have opened new vistas for understanding soteriology. The crucial question remains whether we have evidence of an empire-wide persecution of Christians under Domitian. The official depiction of Domitian as an incompetent ruler who demanded to be worshipped as *dominus et deus noster* comes primarily from Pliny the Younger (ca. 60–115), Tacitus (ca. 55–120) and Suetonius (ca. 75–135). This view heavily influenced later Roman and Christian writers (Slater 1998, 234; Thompson 1990, 97). However, this traditional view of Domitian as an arch persecutor of Christians needs revision (Harland 2000, 104). Because, as empire-wide persecution did not exist, it does not mean that Christians did not experience harassment or repression in Asia Minor. Whether we call it a real crisis (Schüssler-Fiorenza 1985, 194) or a perceived crisis (Collins 1984, 55), we have sufficient evidence of the

promotion of the imperial cult in Roman Asia (Richardson 1996, 94). Tremendous social tension in the churches addressed by the Apocalypse is well known. Yarbro Collins, particularly, identifies the tension between church and synagogue, tensions between Christians and pagan society, hostility towards Rome and tension between rich and poor (1984, 4–7). To these we can add: the external demand for conformity and the growing internal threat of accommodation. DeSilva also emphasises the internal threat of distortion of the counter-definitions that define *communitas* (1992, 287).

The church is thus a body, which serves as a plausibility structure for the counter-definitions of reality, touching the worldview, view of history and hope. The typical Roman ruler speaks for the gods or, sees himself as a god, and to obey him means to be in a right relationship with the world of the gods. The Christian *communitas* could not accept such an order, applied to the *societas*. They, therefore, stepped out of the world and definitions of the *societas* and into the definitions of the *communitas*, building a symbolic universe where the Lamb is the victorious saviour followed by those in "white clothes". The Christian *communitas* was brought into a new soteriological framework of mind, which sincerely touched their everyday relationship to the *societas*. And in this sense Bainbridge and Stark have analysed such *communitas* as a "sect" (1980, 122). Whether we agree with such a definition or not, the Christian *communitas* was faced with the serious issue of survival in such a situation. This brings us to the importance of an identity or definition of "to be redeemed". The aim of the Apocalypse is, inter alia, the preservation of the Christian redeemed *communitas* in all its social destructiveness alongside the *societas*. The Apocalypse calls for the consolidation of the community's identity as followers of the Lamb who "freed us from our sins by his blood" (Rev 1:5).

3.2. *Some Other Inter-Textual Perspectives on Soteriology in the Apocalypse*

In the process of identification as the redeemed followers of the Lamb, the Christian community, were possibly influenced by different views from divergent social and historic backgrounds. It can only be mentioned.

The personification of salvation and liberation is embodied in the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ (Rev 5:9). The Lamb has been identified

with the servant of Isaiah 53:7, the Akedah ram or the atoning sacrifice, the warrior ram in the Animal Apocalypse in Enoch or the Passover lamb, to name the most prominent (Barker 1995, 86). Interestingly, another possible allusion comes from the Tosefta-Targum on 1 Samuel 17 in which the Aramaic word 'רמז' is not used in the sense of "word" but "lamb" (Ablas 1993, 227).

According to the mentioned Targum, Goliath calls David a lamb and himself a lion, and later on a bear. He then says that a lamb cannot overpower a lion, but David differs from him. The context is the appearance of Goliath against the armies of Saul (1 Sam 17). The victory of the lamb, David, over the lion and bear, Goliath, is praised in this poetic fragment (Du Rand 1995, 206; Laws 1988, 37). The use of the Aramaic 'רמז' for "lamb", referring to David's victory over Goliath according to the Tosefta-Targum, opens up new vistas. The son of David, the Messiah, is associated with the title Lamb in Revelation 5:5 and 22:16. Therefore, the comparison between David and Goliath could easily be paralleled to struggle between the Lamb and the Antichrist. When we consider the Targums to be ancient synagogal sermon notes, representing the Jewish oral tradition, the first historical readers of the Apocalypse could easily have been influenced. Messianic David and the victorious Lamb are also related according to Sirach 47:4–6, where it is stated that after his victory over Goliath, David's people gave him a crown of honour (διάδημα δόξης). This parallels the description of the conqueror of the beast, who has many crowns, according to Rev 19:12 (διαδήματα πολλά). This piece of possible background will assist us to put the victorious lamb of the Apocalypse in soteriological perspective.

The Septuagint translators represented the ten different Semitic roots for lamb/sheep by four Greek words: ἀμνός, ἀρνός, ἀρνίον and πρόβατον (Sandy 1991, 451). For a proper perspective on the victorious Lamb of God, we briefly view a couple of concepts which sheep/lamb symbolise in the Old Testament. The term lamb for the Judaistic receivers was not only limited to the context of Isaiah 53. In the Torah, sheep/lamb figures prominently in the context of Passover or sacrifices; in the Psalms and prophets, sheep/lamb is a common metaphor for people (Ezek 34, 2–31).

A surprising metaphor occurs in Daniel's vision of the expedition of one kingdom against another (Dan 8:3–22). A ram is sketched so powerful that no animal could stand against it. A ram is associated with Persia in a Persian Zodiac (Sandy 1991, 451). A sheep/lamb

as conqueror is a role reversal, presented in the Apocalypse. In 1 Enoch 85–90, Enoch has a zoomorphic vision in which individuals appear in the guise of animals, for example, David is pictured as a lamb that became a ram and ruled the sheep (1 En 89:46; Sandy 1991, 453). The Lord sometimes intervenes as He rises up a ram to lead the sheep, and the sheep become victorious over all wild animals (1 En 89, 41–50). It reflects the history of the Jews in conflict with the Gentiles.

The Maccabean conflict with the Seleucids is pictured where ravens smash and eat the sheep, until one lamb grows a large horn to defend himself (1 En 90, 12, 19). This lamb with the great horn probably represents Judas Maccabeus, who was a deliverer and became a national representative of Jewish salvation. The connection between the lamb metaphor and the Jewish deliverer is a significant development of the second temple period (Sandy 1991, 453). In Ezekiel 34 and Daniel 8, a ram is used as a symbol of power. The semantic embodiment of power in the ram is moved to the lamb that grows a horn.

In the Testament of Joseph 19:8–11 we read: "And I saw that a virgin was born from Judah wearing a linen stole; and from her was born a spotless lamb." Then, the lamb conquered the wild animals, according to the passage. And further, instructions follow to "honour Levi and Judah because from their seed will arise the lamb of God who will take away the sin of the world and will save all the nations, as well as Israel" (O'Neill 1979, 7). In a similar passage in the Testament of Benjamin 3:8, the lamb is again used for the Messiah when Jacob says to Joseph: "Through you will be fulfilled the heavenly prophecy concerning the Lamb of God, the saviour of the world . . ." (Sandy 1991, 454). Although the possibility of Christian interpretations cannot be ruled out (Charlesworth 1981b, 34), the pre-Christian date of the Testament of the twelve Patriarchs can hardly be denied (Sandy 1991, 454; Charlesworth 1981a, 213).

The reference to the conquering lamb in the Testament of Joseph 19:8–11 appears not to be a Christian interpretation, because the content is compatible with the eschatological expectations of the Testaments. The metaphor of a conquering lamb for the Messiah is pre-Christian (O'Neill 1979, 4). From the soteriological perspective, the victorious lamb representing delivery for the Jews forms a remarkable early non-Christian background to the later usage in Christianity.

Another soteriological issue featuring in the possible background is the combination of the holy war and exodus themes. The messiah,

a descendent of David, the anointed king, is the military leader of his people. That is, according to the tradition of an eschatological holy war, which is won by God alone or by God and his heavenly armies (Bauckham 1988, 17). Such a divine victory over the enemies of Israel can be traced back to the exodus, in which God overthrew the Egyptians (Exod 14:13–14). The deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib (2 Kgs 19:32–35; Isa 37:33–36) is another typical example. The ideal holy war is one in which the divine warrior requires no human assistance (Isa 59:16; 63:3). According to examples from inter-testament literature, the military messiah conquers without his army (2 Bar 72:6; Sib Or. 3:654, 689). This is surprising, because the dominant Old Testament tradition of the holy war states that God's people also fight, though heavenly armies may join them and the victory is certainly due to God. Such a view inspired the Maccabeans as well as the Jewish resistance movements (Bauckham 1988, 18). And in the later Hebrew apocalypses of the medieval period, the expectation rose that a messiah would lead his troops of Israel into a holy war against the enemies.

It seems clear that Rev 5:5 expresses Jewish hopes for messianic victory by military violence when the elder says that "the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has triumphed" (Bauckham 1988, 20). It is, however, remarkable that the version of the slaughtered lamb (Rev 5:6) follows this nationalistic military expectation of a Jewish triumph over the gentiles. The image of the sacrificial victim, bringing salvation, alongside that of the military conqueror, is to be read within a soteriological framework. It is all about deliverance: from sin and from the gentiles. Jesus, the Messiah, defeated evil by his sacrificial death, not by military victory. And the 144,000, according to Rev 7:2–14, are the army of the military Messiah of David. Again, the holy war motif or background to the military victory is linked with the "great multitude", the followers of the slaughtered Lamb (Rev 7:9–17). The followers' victory in soteriological terms should not be seen in the sense of nationalistic militarism, but of the same kind as that of their leader. The thought of soteriological victory (the white robes of Rev 7:9) is linked with the idea of purification ("they have washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb": Rev 7:14). The martyrs triumph through their martyrdom as followers of the Lamb. The war scroll from Qumran (1QM) emphasises the human participation in the eschatological holy war. The explicit combination of the 144,000 and the Lamb in Rev 14:1–5, once again,

emphasises that the holy war, as part of the process of salvation, is to be fought and won by the Lamb's sacrificial death.

Another integral matter to soteriology, related to holy war, is martyrdom. In 2 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees and the Testament of Moses, non-violent resistance to the point of martyrdom takes precedence over military resistance (Bauckham 1988, 33). In 3 Maccabees, a mother and her seven sons conquer Antiochus (4 Macc 1:11; 9:24, 30), demonstrating that the suffering and death of martyrs are described in military language as part of a holy war. According to the Apocalypse the martyrs do not only conquer by their suffering and death (Rev 6:9–11; 18:24), but by their faithful witness to the point of death (Rev 12:11). John's martyrological reinterpretation of the holy war, therefore, has its roots in the Maccabean literature and the Testament of Moses. Added to this, the exodus language of Deutero-Isaiah (53:7) also links the traditions of martyrdom, in terms of a holy war, with the new exodus.

An interpretation of soteriology in the Apocalypse has to take notice of Bruce Malina's extraordinary social scientific viewpoint. He interprets the seer's visions as sky journeys, describing astrological phenomena. The cosmic Lamb (Rev 5:6) is, accordingly, the constellation of Aries which stands as though slaughtered (Malina 1995, 111). In the sky Aries seems to have a broken neck, having its head turned backward to face Taurus. The cosmic Lamb is identified with "the lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev 5:4), which designates that the twelve tribes of Israel each fell under a different zodiacal constellation. The protective constellation of Judah is Leo with its enormous royal star, Regulus (Malina 1995, 111). Finally, the cosmic Lamb is the sign of the Passover to follow. To reduce the Apocalypse to a cosmic symbolism deriving from the stars, is too farfetched to be of semantic significance.

In the soteriology of the Apocalypse the new Jerusalem as the salvational climax fulfils a special function. From a social scientific viewpoint, the city may be seen as a social order as well as a total way of life (Lim 1988, 138). Urbanisation implies a new order of relationships among people, different from that in rural areas. City building was primarily a religious enterprise (Lim 1988, 141). A city with its inhabitants was built to benefit its divinity. Out of the line of Cain grew the town of Babel and the city Babylon as symbolic example of humanity's misuse of urbanisation. In contrast, Jerusalem, the city of God, had chosen to demonstrate his *shalom* (Ps 122:6–9) where

faith in Yahweh was practised. The chosen Jerusalem, however, failed to fulfil Yahweh's purposes because it became selfish, unjust and idolatrous (Mic 3:10; Ezek 16:6). Therefore, the eschatological vision of a new city was developed (Roloff 1990, 121; Wilson 2000, 193). The new Jerusalem, as manifestation of God's soteriological purpose, will be made known as the new earth (Ezek 40–48; Rev 21:2, 18). In this city God will be manifested in his fullness. The new Jerusalem does not grow out of the old Jerusalem but out of the temple, because God will be the temple and He will be all in all (Rev 21:7, 11, 23).

4. Theological Resumé

4.1. *Soteriology in the Theological Structure*

We can distinguish among different levels of narrative in the Apocalypse. According to Eugene Boring, the vision report which forms a prominent part of the framework of the Apocalypse is itself a narrative, as are the visions that constitute the content of the Apocalypse (1992, 703). The Apocalypse functions as a story with a coherent theological plot through which the believers' identity as redeemed is unfolded (Du Rand 1997, 60). In other words, the theological structure of the narrative of the Apocalypse, by way of interpretation, indicates that life in their society makes sense because of their shared knowledge of salvation.

The following possible levels of narrative, a related but adjusted model to that of Boring (1992, 704–719), can be distinguished: Narrative *level one*, explains John and the community's story; narrative *level two* contains the divine and cosmic story, describing the visions of God, Christ as well as the dramatic acts like the breaking of the seals, the trumpets and the outpouring of the bowls, and narrative *level three* explains the theological or God's story, telling the supposed macro-narrative in which, from this viewpoint, soteriological undertones are prominent.

John and the churches' story can be called autobiographical, expressing John and the churches' experience of salvation despite exile and persecution. This plotted narrative framework in letter format (Rev 1:9–13; 22; 22:6–11) derives its theological meaning from the non-plotted macro-narrative. The soteriological destiny of John and the churches is in the hands of the glorified one, "like the son of man" (Rev 1:13), the "one who is coming soon" (Rev 22:20).

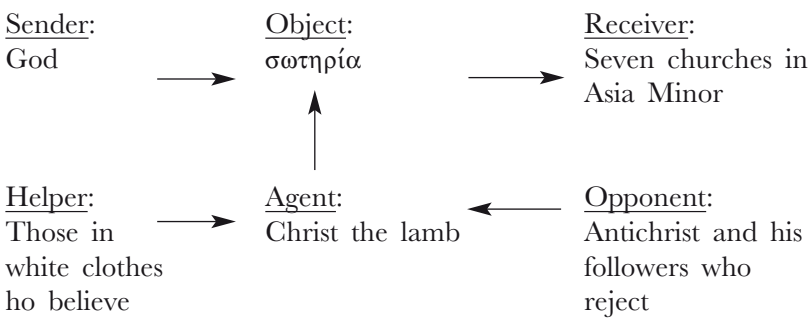
According to the divine and cosmic story, narrated in the format of visions from Rev 4:1 through Rev 22:5, God the creator (Rev 4:1–11) and the executor of salvation, the Lamb, are the main actors in the story. God provides the Lamb who was slain "to purchase men for God", and to make people "to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth" (Rev 5:9, 10). The salvational Lamb opens the sealed book. The reader gets the impression that the eschatological soteriological dramatic narrative on this level has its origin in God's creation, unfolds through the slaughtering of the Lamb as God's salvational agent, and concludes with God and the Lamb on the throne (Rev 22:1). God on the throne and the Lamb are praised by the multitude in white robes (Rev 7:9–17). Salvation has a transcendent origin with God and an earthly and eschatological accomplishment.

The theological macronarrative is the theological story according to the content. It consists of the churches' past, present and future. God's salvational activity in the past emphasised his provision of the Lamb (Rev 5:13; 7:10) and his power and kingship when Satan was hurled to the earth (Rev 12:10). Christ is God's provided salvation (Rev 12:1–5) to accomplish historical and cosmic victories. The song of Moses also reminds us of God's saving activity in the past (Rev 15:3, 4). And God's present activity has identification value for the churches. He is ruler of the universe, sitting on his throne (Rev 4:2; 5:1). God's reign in heaven is already a recognised reality (Rev 12:7–9). God's kingdom being there, is a present reminder to the churches to recognise his kingship on earth as it already exists in heaven (Rev 11:15).

Proof of salvation in the present is the sealing of the 144,000 by God in his capacity as ruler. The practical implication of God's kingship on earth is his establishment of salvation. Through the Lamb's slaughtering and the followers' response by believing, God's soteriologically destined commitment becomes visible (Lee 1998, 167). God's future activity is concentrated on the eschatological fulfilment of salvation, namely the eschaton or the coming. The eschatological coming of Christ, portrayed as the marriage of the Lamb and the bride (church) as the new Jerusalem, is the futuristic climax of salvation (Rev 1:7, 17–18; 2:5, 16, 17, 25, 27; 3:5, 9, 11; 14:14; 16:15–17; 14; 19:7, 11; 20:1ff; 21:9; 22:7, 20). Although God's judgement unfolds in the present and the future, the downfall of Babylon and his judgement from the great white throne will be accomplished in future. God's judgement is but one side of the soteriological

manifestation of his kingship and reign. The kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of God (Rev 11:15). After the final battle (Rev 16:14), God will be praised for his salvation, glory and power (Rev 19:1, 5, 6).

To summarise: Christ the Lamb, came as God's agent into history and brought salvation through his death and resurrection, described as victory, demonstrating the power of the reigning God, providing his followers with an identity and power in this world. Salvation means to celebrate God's reign in this world as it already exists in heaven. This is the basic theological macronarrative from which all the other narrative levels derive meaning. The soteriological Lamb-event forms the centre point between creation and fulfilment. God's salvation for the church on the grounds of the Lamb-event (Rev 1–3) is followed by the unfolding of salvation and judgement in the cosmos on the grounds of the Christ-event (Rev 4–11) to be staged in history until God will make everything new (Rev 12–22). The structural theological findings above fit into the following well-known actantial model of Greimas.



God sent salvation to the churches through the Lamb as his agent. He was received in faith by those who washed their clothes in the blood of the Lamb, but rejected and opposed by the Antichrist and his followers.

4.2. *The Pivotal Lamb-event*

Soteriology in the Apocalypse is predominantly focused on the Lamb-event, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The functional role of Jesus Christ according to the Apocalypse is to transform "the kingdom of the world" into "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" (Rev

11:15). That involves salvation and judgement. The soteriological victory of the Lamb through slaughtering has to be continued by his followers' witnessing and is to be rounded off at his parousia in the future.

The title Lamb (τὸ ἀρνίον), referring to Christ, occurs 28 times in the Apocalypse (Moulton-Geden 1978, 107) of which seven are in combination with God (Rev 5:13; 6:16; 7:10; 14:4; 21:22; 22:1, 3), which indicates that God and the Lamb are in the closest relationship in the soteriological process. God is establishing the recognition of his reign on earth through the Lamb-event. It is important to note that the name Jesus occurs 14 times in the Apocalypse of which seven are in the phrase "the witness of Jesus" (Rev 1:2, 9; 12:17; 19:10 (twice); 20:4). It is all about the witness that Jesus bore to be continued by his followers (Bauckham 1993, 66). Without digging into the variety of possible backgrounds of the metaphor Lamb (Aune 1997, 368–373; Hasitschka 1994, 487–491; Barker 1995, 86–91), it can mainly be interpreted in two primary ways: as sacrificial or as a victorious leader and ruler metaphor.

The Lamb as a sacrificial metaphor (Aune 1997, 371–373) points to the crucifixion of Jesus as the pivotal focus of soteriology. The Lamb looks as though it had been slain (ὡς ἐσφαγμένον—Rev 5:6, 12). The consequence of being slaughtered is redemption by means of his blood, that is his death (Rev 5:9; 7:14). And the soteriological consequence of the Lamb-event is that the people of God conquered Satan by the blood of the Lamb, according to Rev 12:11. By referential association, the title Lamb has become a soteriological Messianic title. Jesus as sacrificial Lamb whose death, interpreted as victory, brought salvation, can probably be based on two possible traditions: the Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7) and the purification offering (Lev 17:11).

The Lamb as metaphor for a victorious leader and ruler functions in the narrative of the Apocalypse synonymously with the title Messiah (Hofius 1998, 273; Aune 1997, 368–371). The Lamb is introduced in Rev 5:5 by two definite Messianic designations: "the lion of the tribe of Judah and the root of David." The Lamb is enthroned (Rev 7:17), shares God's throne (Rev 22:1, 3) and receives the same praise and worship (Rev 5:12–13; 7:9–10). The Lamb is the shepherd of God's people (Rev 7:17; 14:1–5), a well-known Old Testament and Near Eastern metaphor for a king. The Lamb is also a victorious warrior (Rev 17:14) and the Lamb's book of life is mentioned in the

presentation of judgement (Rev 13:8, 21:27). The salvational Lamb is not only sketched by sacrificial images, but also by the powerful and judicial metaphors. The marriage of the Lamb with the new Jerusalem as his bride expresses metaphorically the soteriological relationship between God and his own (Rev 19:7, 9; 21:9, 22–23). Giesen justly combines the two ways of viewing the Lamb in the Apocalypse by commenting: ". . . dass Christus das Lamm gerade in seiner schwachkeit stark ist" (1990, 262).

The first appearance of the Lamb in the narrative of the Apocalypse in Rev 5:1–14 is of crucial importance. The scroll in God's right hand (Rev 5:1) is, within the co-text of the Apocalypse of John, to be seen as God's redemptive plan "by which he means to assert his sovereignty over a sinful world and so to achieve the purpose of creation" (Caird 1966, 63). It represents the final stage in God's redemptive purpose for the world to be unfolded between Christ's exaltation and the final inauguration and acknowledgement of his eternal reign in Christ's parousia. Soteriology is the eschatologically knitting together of the Lamb-event and the final parousia. The soteriological focus in this vision falls on the significant word "worthy" (ἄξιος) in Rev 5:2, 4. It is not only about an ". . . inner ethical presupposition of the ability . . ." (Charles 1920, 139), but the Lamb's soteriological commitment as God's mediator, being salvationally "worthy". The Lamb has become the agent through Whom God implements the divine salvation and judgement. The "new song" (Rev 5:9–10) is a celebration of redemption as fulfilment of creation. On ground level, redemption means to the redeemed their liberation to serve as priests (Rev 5:10) and to proclaim God's reign on earth as it already exists in heaven. The Lamb-event enabled God to do what could not be done before—the opening of the scroll—indicating that God's salvational power is relational (Farmer 1993, 96). The Lamb's victory is registered on earth as inauguration of God's soteriological process to be implemented by the followers of the Lamb (Aune 1996, 270). Although the Lamb already shares in God's rule and throne, God's plan remains incomplete, unless the Lamb receives full power and authority by being worthy to open the scroll, in order to achieve the final eschatological victory (Aune 1997, 374). And with the demonstration of the lamb's "worthiness" by opening the seals, the stage is now set for the apocalyptic drama to unfold in judgement and salvation.

In a proleptic celebration of the eschatological triumph of God, God and the Lamb are praised for "salvation" in Rev 7:10, referring

to deliverance or victory over persecution and tribulation (Aune 1998, 470). The victory won, according to Revelation 12:11, is not only a victory in heaven, but also on earth, won through martyrdom. The verb "to be victorious" (νικᾶν) means to conquer through death, with Christ as the subject (Rev 5:5) or when Christian martyrs are the subject (Rev 12:11; 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). These Christians are those who "follow the Lamb wherever he goes" (Rev 14:4), fitting into the metaphor of the Messiah as shepherd (Rev 7:17). It functions as a metaphor for martyrdom, conceived as true discipleship (Aune 1998, 814). Martyrdom is, soteriologically interpreted, participation in the victorious sacrificial death of the Lamb.

4.3. *The Marriage of the Lamb*

The soteriological climax according to the Apocalypse is the nuptial eschatology, projected in terms of a modus in situation: which means, to be perfectly gathered with God, through the marriage of the Lamb with the bride, the new Jerusalem, to be situated in the totally new creation, the new heaven and the new earth. After the condemnation of the woman, Babylon (Rev 17–18), the multitude around the throne shout: "Let us rejoice . . . for the wedding of the Lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready . . ." (Rev 19:7). Those who are invited to the wedding are blessed (Rev 19:9). The vision of the marriage only manifests in Rev 21:2 when John indicates that he sees "the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband." In verse 9 of the same chapter, an angel says: "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

In Rev 19:6 and 7–8 we find two parallel passages, formatted as hymns of praise, conforming to the Old Testament genre of hymns (Mohwinckel 1967, I, 81–105; Aune 1998, 1028). The typical hymn consists of three parts: an invitation to sing (hallelujah, in this case); the thematic part (introduced by ὅτι in this instance); and the main part of the hymn, describing God's acts (the wedding of the Lamb in this instance). The repetition of the invitation to sing in verse 6 and again in verse 7 is remarkable. What is even more thrilling, is the causative ὅτι, repeated in verse 6 and in verse 7. In the first case: Hallelujah *because* (ὅτι) God reigns, and in the second case: Let us rejoice *because* (ὅτι) the wedding of the Lamb has come. The establishment of God's reign is linked to the marriage of the Lamb as

climactic soteriological moments in the eschatological drama. The nuptial theme, the wedding, is to be taken as the manifestation of God's reign (Miller 1998, 304). Even the "fine linen, bright and clean" that was given to the bride, probably by God (Rev 19:7–8), as visible manifestation of salvation, illustrates how this wedding manifests God's reign (Fekkes 1990, 275).

The phrase ὁ γάμος τοῦ ἀρνίου occurs in Rev 19:7, 9, and the image of the "wife" (γύνη) in Rev 19:7 and 21:9, and the related metaphor "bride" (νύμφη) in Rev 21:2, 9 and 22:17. It is clear that the eschatological bride is the soteriological product of God's activity. Miller correctly indicates that the in-between passages, about the rider on the white horse (Rev 19:11–21), the thousand years (Rev 20:1–6), Satan's destruction (Rev 20:7–9) and the final judgement of the dead (Rev 20:11–15) are activities in which the "bridegroom", Christ, prominently takes centre stage to accomplish God's reign, as well as conferring bridal purity (Rev 19:8; 1998, 309). What first appears to be an interruption in the nuptial narrative, is indeed a necessary christological soteriological establishment of God's reign. Jesus acts to establish God's reign on the one hand, but also to bring his bride, the church, to nuptial union, on the other.

It is Jesus' salvational actions as Lamb that provide the righteous deeds to the bride (Rev 19:8). This soteriological fact is further developed in Revelation 21–22, where it is indicated that the corporate bride are those who have attained victory by their righteous deeds, sharing in the reign of God and being the bride to the bridegroom, the Lamb. It seems clear that this nuptial union already begins in this age. The final nuptial destiny is not an individualistic one but in the words of Roloff, means that the new creation is part of the ecclesiological bride: ". . . gewinnt. . . . ihre Zielrichtung aus der Verbindung mit dem Motiv der zukünftigen Gottesstadt. Dies aber ist ein ekklesiologisches Motiv . . ." (1990, 129). The destined role of the redeemed is to be active in this time and world, as bride.

4.4. *Eternal Life with God: The New Jerusalem As Symbol*

The final soteriological destiny of the redeemed is portrayed as the new heaven and new earth, the new Jerusalem—the restoration of perfect life with God. The Bible story begins with a perfect garden, Paradise, and closes with a perfect city, the new Jerusalem. The theological pinnacle of salvation is the perfect life with God, expressed

by the symbol of the new Jerusalem. In the words of Jürgen Roloff: "Er ist in der Tat von theologischem Gewicht, dass Johannes seine ekklesiologische Zukunftsschau am Bild der πόλις des geordneten, sinnvoll gestalteten Miteinanders der Menschen, orientiert" (1990, 129).

By way of interpretation, there are two Jerusalems in the Apocalypse. There is the new Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven as part of the new creation (Rev 19:7; 21:2, 9). The new Jerusalem is both a woman and a city, the bride and wife of the Lamb, parallel to Babylon. Then, there is the "holy city" of Rev 11:2, referring to the faithful church in its suffering (Bauckham 1993, 127). The forerunner of the new Jerusalem is the holy city, mother Zion, and the opposite is the whore Babylon.

This new Jerusalem is portrayed in total contrast to the real city Jerusalem. God's eschatological destiny for the redeemed "comes down out of heaven", depicting a radically new reality: "a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away . . ." (Rev 21:1). A voice from the throne, neither God nor Christ, proclaims the city to be God's dwelling among people, introducing the covenantal statement: "They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God" (Rev 21:3). The new Jerusalem is placed within the context of the covenant and the new creation. Membership of this new city belongs to those who overcome (Rev 21:7). Rev 21:9–22:5 forms a so-called "Jerusalem appendix" (Deutsch 1987, 110) to develop the Jerusalem theme.

The readers were used to belonging to a city. To participate in a city's public life supposed a particular social status and affluence (Hoppe 2000, 151; Malina 2000, 72–79; Roloff 1993, 85–88). Because of idolatry and immorality, bound up with typical large cities, Christians often had to dissociate and distance themselves from social life in the city. Diaspora Jews often shared a double loyalty—to their new adopted city, as well as to the religious centre Jerusalem. Jerusalem was for them the spiritual alternative to Rome (Bauckham 1993, 129). But the fall and failure of the earthly Jerusalem deprived loyal Jewish Christians of a city to belong to. On the other hand, they had to dissociate themselves from the corrupting Babylon (Rome). So they needed a vision of the new Jerusalem towards which they might live, a city truly worth belonging to. The restoration of the historical Jerusalem, according to the prophetic expectations (Is. 49:62), were replaced by a new hope for a new Jerusalem in the second temple period under the influence of a political crisis (I En. 90:28–29;

4 Esd. 9:43–47; 2 Bar. 3:1–3). In describing the new Jerusalem as bride and wife, the Apocalypse emphasises the quality of God and the redeemed in the apocalyptic age.

The city is God's dwelling place (ἡ σκήνη) with people, indicating that the entire city is apocalyptic temple (Rev 21:9–27). John's description resembles not only Solomon's temple (2 Chr 3:8), but also Ezekiel (Ezek 41:21; 43:16) and Qumran material (1Qs. 8:8–9) (Deutsch 1987, 113–115). In the new order of things, God and the Lamb take the place of a temple as place of worship. The temple as symbol of divine presence is replaced by the divine presence itself (Beale 1999, 1103). The new Jerusalem surpasses the restoration of Jerusalem in the post-exilic period, according to Isaiah 65:17. The new Jerusalem is even identified with paradise (Rev 22:1–5), the symbol of primeval completeness. This new creation signifies the completeness of salvation for the redeemed. In the apocalyptic new order the gap between heaven and earth is abolished (Du Rand 1988, 67; Deutsch 1987, 118).

The citizens of the new Jerusalem are the redeemed conquerors (Rev 21:7), "sons" (Rev 21:7), "servants" (Rev 22:3), those who bear the name on their foreheads (Rev 22:4). Remarkable is the combination of particularism, referring to the covenantal indications in Rev 21:3, 7, and universalism, with reference to the nations (Rev 21:3). The eschatological blessings of the new Jerusalem are shared with the nations, but the covenant people retain a special privilege (Lee 2001, 267; Bauckham 1993, 139). This does not mean that the Apocalypse predicts the salvation of each and every human being. Rev 21:8 and 27 provide clear indications that unrepentant sinners have no place in the new Jerusalem (Gundry 1987, 256). Therefore, the washing of their robes in the blood of the Lamb (Rev 7:14) has identification value in the final destiny.

Creation finds its eschatological fulfilment in the new creation, the new Jerusalem with God's perfect presence. Although God is already soteriologically present in the slaughtered Lamb, and in the Spirit in the faithful witness of the Lamb's followers, He will make his home with humanity perfect in the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:3). Sharing in God's eschatological presence entails sharing in his holiness and glory. This is the pinnacle of the new life as consequence of God's soteriological process. Bauckham concludes that in the new Jerusalem the perfection of God's kingdom theonomy (the recognition of his rule on earth) coincides with human autonomy (self determination) (1993, 143). The vision of the new Jerusalem is the soteriological culmination of the Apocalypse of John.

4.5. *Salvation As Liberation*

From a soteriological viewpoint, the exodus motif plays a prominent role in the Apocalypse. In the history of Israel, God politically liberated his people, destroyed their Egyptian oppressors and led them through an exodus to a land of their own (Bauckham 1993, 70; Schüssler-Fiorenza 1998, 75). This formed the model for prophetic and apocalyptic expectations of a great salvation and liberation in the future—an eschatological exodus (cf. I *En.* 1:4; *Apoc. Abr.* 30:2–31). Exodus has become a symbol of salvation as liberation. The typical element of exodus as liberation is judgement as a means of liberation (Kio 1989, 122). It involves the series of plagues that afflicted Egypt and its people because they refused the Israelites to leave the country (Exod 7–12). The judgements served to liberate Israel (Exod 3:20; 4:21–23), as well as to establish a relationship of identity for the people themselves (Exod 7:5; 10:1–3). To Israel it was Yahweh and not any other deity who brought them out of Egypt. The initiative always came from Yahweh. During the time of the exodus, Israel came to a self-understanding of election as the initial act of liberation (Deut 6:5–7; 7:6–8). Without doubt, the framework of exodus as liberation is the covenant (Exod 19:3–24:14), emphasising the personal relationship between Israel and Yahweh. The dynamic symbolic presence of God in the tabernacle made his people what they were (Zimmerli 1982, 9). God "will dwell among the people of Israel and He will be their God. And they will know that I am the Lord their God who brought them forth out of Egypt" (Exod 29:45–46). In a sense God concealed his presence, but the presence, which concealed itself, was not an absence (Terrien 1978, 62). It was real enough to function as communication with the people.

When we compare these typical elements of exodus as liberation with the Apocalypse, it becomes clear that the exodus symbol is a persistent feature in the Apocalypse of John. The general life stance found in the books of Exodus, Deuternomium and Isaiah is very similar to that found in the Apocalypse. It comes to the essence that God is taking sides with his own who are in slavery and oppressed. The first historical readers of the Apocalypse in Asia Minor similarly experienced a crisis under Rome. Through symbols and images the Apocalypse have evocative and emotive power to let the oppressed in Asia Minor experience salvation and liberation. Not only redemption form spiritual sin, but also in political and socio-economical categories. In Revelation 1:5–6, in a typical baptismal formula

(Schüssler-Fiorenza 1998, 69), it is stated that by his blood, Christ has freed the baptised from their sins, installing them to kingship and making them priests for God. And in Rev 5:9–10, in the "new song", the same thought is expressed in theological and socio-political language. As Israel was freed from the slavery of Egypt and constituted as a kingdom of priests and a nation through the covenant with God, so also are those who are purchased for God by the slaughtering of the Lamb, made a kingdom and priests (Schüssler-Fiorenza 1998, 76).

Judgement expressed through the seals, trumpets and bowls has formal dependence on the exodus plague tradition (Rev 8:6–11:19; 15:1–4). The obvious allusion to the covenant in Rev 1:5–6 is to be compared with Ex. 19:4–6 and 24:3–8. The pinnacle of covenantal language is the well-known formula in Rev 21:7: ". . . and I will be his God and he will be my son." The presence of the exodus God in the tabernacle is parallel to the vision of the new Jerusalem when God and the Lamb's presence will fill the "new heaven".

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CONCLUSION

SOTERIOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: SOME TENTATIVE REMARKS

Jan G. van der Watt
University of Pretoria

1. Introduction

The soteriological landscape of the New Testament exhibits a rich texture, diverse and powerful. This complex landscape does not lend itself to being diminished into précis form. The multi-faceted levels of diversity, theological and linguistic alike cannot simply be "synchronized". Neither can the documents of the New Testament be classed as (abstract) theological treatises. They should rather be seen as reflecting the integration of the message into particular situations of the people involved in the first and original communication process. Thus a truly diverse soteriological landscape is birthed as individual situations play a decisive role in how the message of the Christ-event is expressed. The documents address different issues, employing different linguistic styles, thereby creating different foci. This makes the use of generic statements problematic, since the finer nuances of the different writings stand in danger of being compromised.

The diversity of the New Testament documents is further encountered when one considers the canonical process via which the documents were collected. The canonical documents were not written as a unity, or as a planned, coherent body of thought. The canonical process, which brought these documents together, implies that there may be material not contained in the canon, which may be of value in linking or explaining the different interpretations, and applications found in the canonical documents.[1] The commonality of the canonical documents lies in the shared tradition, which was interpreted and applied according to the needs of specific situations.

[1] In this volume we decided to stay with the canonical documents, although other relevant material may be brought into discussion if necessary.

A similar measure of diversity runs through this book, in that the collection of essays does not always follow a uniform theoretical approach. Different emphases and filters in the reading process lead to different results, not because of the difference in the material itself. If suitable comparisons are to be made between different books, it follows that there needs to be a uniformity of methodology.

However, in reading the different essays one is constantly reminded of similarities, some blatantly obvious and some more elusive. It is not as if one is transported from one unrelated world to the next when reading the different New Testament documents. One realizes that one is in different rooms, when you move from Mark to Luke, or from Matthew to John or to Paul, but you cannot escape the impression that you are in the same house. The architecture remains the same. If one therefore focuses on the finer details of a room, the broader lines of the shared architecture might be lost or overlooked. A quest for exact replication will be in vain, and will hamper one's ability to gain a more holistic perspective of the overall architecture.

In this light a careful effort will be made to bring together some of the *material contained in this volume*. Other material or different positions that are not reflected in these essays are not taken into consideration.

While a degree of (hopefully careful) synthesis will be attempted, diversity will still be acknowledged by constantly referring to the different books when presenting similarities. The focus will therefore not centre on fine or detailed nuances or differences between the different documents. At most I would like to refer to *tendencies* that arise from a fairly broad level of abstraction.

The Gospels, Pauline material and other material will also be treated differently. This is a decision more of practical nature than principle. The Gospel and the Letters of John share a much closer relationship than the synoptic gospels and the Gospel of John; nevertheless the Gospel of John is discussed with the synoptic gospels, since there are similarities, which become apparent in doing it in this way. It will however take a much more comprehensive essays (book-s) than this one to do justice to comparisons between the different documents of the New Testament. This essay does not seek to accomplish such a mammoth task.

The procedure followed was not to chose certain "headings" and consequently look for matching information in the essays, but the other way round. The essays were read and the relevant issues have been noted. Ultimately the broader themes, discussed below, "presented themselves" as viable options for systematizing some of the material.

2. The Soteriology of the Four Gospels

The essays on the four gospels show notable differences as well as interesting similarities. The material could be systematized under the following headings.

2.1. *God's Salvation Dawned, as was Promised in the Jewish Scriptures*

A common thread found in all the gospels is that God's salvation has dawned, as was promised by the Jewish scriptures. This assumption in the gospels forms an important framework within which the salvific work of Jesus should be understood and serves as proof of the continuity of God's plan in the midst of the Christ events. In spite of the difference in language used in the respective gospels, a definite overlap exists on this conceptual level.

The author of Mark emphasizes the significance of the First Testament prophecies and locates the salvific actions of Jesus solidly within the promise that Yahweh will return to Zion to save his people and establish his kingdom. Luke emphasizes the long history of God with his people. His narration of the Christ events, like that of Mark, shows a special focus on the fulfillment of the prophesies of hope for salvation. It goes without saying that God stands central in this process and is seen as the absolute source of salvation. Ultimately salvation goes back to Him, although Jesus is the agent in and through whom salvation is realized. The same emphasis is found in John's Gospel where the prophets and scriptures of the First Testament witness to Jesus as the One through whom the new eschatological life is made available.

2.2. *The Story of Israel Retold and Thus Redefined*

The story of Israel is retold in the light of the interaction between the First Testament prophecies and the Christ events. God is indeed triumphantly returning to his people as an act of divine power, as He promised in the Holy Scriptures. He does this in and through Jesus who dies in Jerusalem to save the people. Jesus' way to salvation is now the promised way of Yahweh with his people.

As Mark aptly describes, salvation means the coming of God's kingdom, which includes the return of Israel from exile, with evil defeated, and God returning to his people. Matthew approached it a bit

differently and retells the "history of how God sent Joshua from Egypt as Moses' successor to save Israel". Healing of Israel now takes place through Jesus, even though political stress is not the focus here. He brings the "gospel of the kingdom" and brings the "little ones" into the "imperial household" of God.

Luke's story of salvation shares the concerns of Mark but has a broader focus. He describes God's restoration, through Jesus, to reach all levels of society. Above all, their position before God is restored through Jesus who has the power to forgive sins. According to Luke, the First Testament framework provides the reason for as well as the program of Jesus' salvation. According to John God sent his Son to draw to him everybody who belongs to God—like the snake in the desert Jesus now heals the believers and gives them life, which means that they become part of the family of the King. Jesus Christ as the true Shepherd and Vine, redefines the new people of God in terms of his mission and message as God's Son.

Situating the salvific events against the backdrop of First Testament prophesies inevitably focuses on the eschatological nature of the presence of Christ. In these eschatological times Israel will be restored.

2.3. *The Presence of Evil*

Inherent to the gospel narratives is the presence of Satan and evil. None of the gospels can be read without acknowledging the contrasting presence of evil and Satan. The reality of the presence of God in Christ is unfolded in the context of conflict with and eventual victory over evil.

In Mark the focus on the role of Satan is toned down after Jesus' victory in the wilderness, although he does not disappear from the narrative. Mark is more concerned about Jesus' redemptive actions than the cosmic defeat of Satan. The need for salvation stays bound to the presence of Satan, although Mark does not see Satan as the sole source of evil. Evil also originates in the human heart. Nevertheless, through Jesus evil is overpowered and salvation becomes possible. However, Mark looks forward to the final defeat of Satan in the End-time. In Luke Satan indeed remains active and stands in conflict with Jesus up to the final stages of that Gospel.

John's Gospel shares the basic idea of the presence and activity of Satan. Satan is described as the father of murder and lies and the prince of those who belong to the *kosmos* (used in a negative sense). The

conflict with Satan is not emphasized (John's Gospel has no exorcism narratives), because he is thrown "outside" (12:30–31). The Son of the King overpowered the prince of this world in order to draw to him everyone who belongs to the Father. The image in the other Gospels of a strong man who must first be bound in order to take what is in the house, expresses the same idea, but in different terms.

2.4. *Jesus as the Agent of Salvation*

In all the gospels Jesus is the purveyor of salvation—the presence of the good news is Christologically defined. Although there is consensus about the centrality of Jesus, views on his role, position, and work are developed and expressed in different ways in the respective gospels.

In Mark Jesus is described in terms of his role as wonder worker, saviour, and proclaimer. Matthew presents him as the Davidic king who stood in opposition even to the emperor. He is indeed the "new Moses" who must save Israel from their sins. Jesus is the way to life and the One who reveals the Father, says John. He is the Son, the pre-existent Logos, who came to reveal the Father and who brings eternal life. For Luke Jesus forms the climax of God's salvation history. Jesus' entire life is seen as redemptive. God's salvation of Israel already starts with his birth. As the Messiah-Servant and the prophet-saviour Jesus is the core of God's plan for universal salvation.

2.4.1. *The Deeds of Jesus*

The deeds of Jesus have salvific significance, especially the miracles and signs that aptly illustrate the presence and power of God in Jesus.

In Mark distinction can be made between "provisional" and "definite" salvific works. "Provisional" salvation refers to healing people, bringing people back to life and restoring their wholeness, although they will eventually die again. The ongoing destructive process in this world is neutralized. As part of the gift of the Messianic age these healing actions of Jesus are directly related to the forgiveness of sin. "Definite" salvation is of course eternal salvation. It is the protection of life from the threat of death.

According to Luke Jesus brings liberation to his people through his deeds. As the gospel for the underdogs, he likewise describes salvation along two lines, physical and spiritual; not only physical and mental restoration takes place, but also spiritual restoration, which means forgiveness of sin, atonement and eternal life—hence a total

restoration on all levels of society. In John these deeds are called *semeia*, which underlines the referential function of these deeds. They refer to the salvific presence and actions of Jesus. Through the deeds of Jesus it became evident that the new era of God's salvific presence dawned.

2.4.2. *The Role of the Cross in the Process of Salvation*

The cross-events are central to the narratives of all the Gospels, although there are notable differences regarding the presentation and interpretation of the cross.

In Mark the emphasis is on suffering and servitude for others. Jesus is able to save others, because he died. He is King, not in spite of, but exactly because he gives up his life for others. Van Aarde points out that in Matthew salvation is based on "God's paradoxical saving presence in the life of the 'forsaken' crucified Jesus". He does not focus further on the cross except in linking it to the destruction of the temple and thus with the conflict between the followers of the "new Moses" and their opponents.

Steyn indicates that no significant emphasis is found in Luke on the salvific function of the cross, at least not to the extent of Mark or Matthew. There are scholars who claim that Luke does not focus on the atonement power of the cross of Christ at all. No direct soteriological significance is drawn from Jesus' suffering or death, except that it might be exemplary. Steyn nevertheless argues that Luke had a redemptive understanding of Jesus' death, although the disciples did not understand the necessity of Jesus' suffering.

John argues that the cross-events reveal the identity of Jesus—by laying down his life and taking it up again, the power and presence of the Father with him is evident. Little or no apparent emphasis is placed on the atoning value of the cross in John's Gospel, although Jesus is pictured as the Lamb of God (1:29).

The different Gospels have clearly chosen to present their material on this central issue in different ways and have also chosen to allot different emphases to the reality of the cross within the process of salvation. Nevertheless they share the conviction of the centrality of the cross-events in the Jesus narrative.

2.5. *A Decisive Turn Towards and Acceptance of Jesus is Required*

Salvation deals with becoming part of the new people of God. This presupposes a decisive turn towards God away from one's previous

existence, with the implications of such a change. Different concepts are used in the gospels to describe this decisive change. Faith is the most common term used to mark the turning point, while conversion and following Jesus are also used. Faith describes the acceptance of and association with Jesus and is the mark of the true Israel.

As Combrink sums it up for Mark: "In the final conclusion salvation is intimately bound to reaction to the honour/shame response to Jesus as the Son of man". God himself stands behind salvation while Jesus acts as mediator and broker of God's favour. As Saviour he provides salvation in the narrower sense as healing as well as in a broader sense as salvation from sin. This creates new existential opportunities for believers. Conversion is not simply turning away from your sin; but Israel is challenged radically to surrender their way of being Israel and trust Jesus for his way.

In Matthew choice is also important—people must choose between the old and new Moses, with all the implications associated with such a choice. To accept Jesus as the Davidic Messiah—the one God has commissioned to save Israel from their sin—leads to salvation. They will live in the presence of the God-with-us.

In John's Gospel the nature of sin is defined in terms of an unwillingness to accept and follow Jesus. Unbelief constitutes sin. Salvation is formulated in terms of opening people's eyes so that they can accept Jesus in faith.

It is expected that people who decide to follow Jesus should follow him unconditionally. Nevertheless, the role of God in this process of choice, conversion or faith is not excluded; on the contrary. God remains the saviour.

2.6. *Resocialization as an Essential Part of Salvation*

In the context of God returning to his people, it is not surprising that salvation is described in terms of belonging to a new group, often expressed in well-known Jewish terms and symbols, but consistently associated with Jesus as God's Son and Messiah. Jesus inaugurates God's salvation in Israel and in the world by means of establishing new relations. Boundaries are transcended, and new relations between God and humans as well as between humans themselves, are established, even outside existing familial and national boundaries. New loyalties, new responsibilities, new ethics, and behaviour are introduced.

In Mark this radical change is described as receiving life, which means a change in one's state of being. The story of Matthew con-

fronts people with the quest for membership of the true Israel. Were people willing to concede that Jesus was Israel's true Moses? Choosing Jesus, as the "new Moses", results in being a disciple of the kingdom of heaven.

For Luke salvation takes place in the presence of Jesus—his presence introduces the kingdom of God. Believers become members of this new Kingdom that constitutes their newfound social reality. Although the consummation still lies in the future, the present reality should not be overlooked.

John uses familial images to express the salvific process (as do documents like 1 Peter, the Thessalonian correspondence, and the Letters of John). By being born again, a person becomes part of the family of God with everything that such a change in being implies. By establishing a new social reality resocialization as well as redefinition of believers takes place.

3. Soteriology in Pauline Literature

Discussions on Pauline soteriology are usually influenced by the complex nature of the terminology, development of ideas and structure of thought inherent to the Pauline material.[2] The variety of metaphors, expressions and terms used to express Paul's thoughts on soteriology are noteworthy. In spite of the variety, virtually all the letters share certain common elements. In this discussion the emphasis is going to fall on the images and what they want to convey and not on the specific nature and contribution of each letter.

3.1. *Metaphors to Live by . . .*

It became clear that different metaphors or images are used to express the process and dynamics of salvation. This is true of all the New Testament documents, but especially of the Pauline literature. These metaphors or images sometimes overlap semantically (they address

[2] For the sake of this discussion, Pauline and deutro-Pauline letters will be treated together. The intention is not to focus on small detail or the finer developments in soteriological thoughts. This overview wants to look at possible similarities as well as the nature of the images, not denying the differences. For specific nuances see the particular essays themselves.

the same issue in different ways); for instance, the images of moving from slave to child or enemy to friend in essence both express the same idea, namely, restoration of a relationship.

The richness and power of the Pauline images emphasize the importance of images for expressing his soteriological thought. Without proper understanding of these images it seems inconceivable to grasp Paul's message. The following overview of the essays provides a feeling for the variety of images Paul uses, without claiming that this presents a complete picture of Paul's imagery.

- Joubert developed his argument within the framework of gracious *benefactorism*. The gracious God benefits people who do not deserve it. In the face of consistent ingratitude God freely bestows favour to everybody through Christ and thus challenges all previous markers of status in Mediterranean society. There is now equal access for all to God's favour, irrespective of the status or behaviour of the beneficiaries. However, this grace calls for fitting gracious responses.
- Du Toit draws attention to the use of *forensic imagery*, which focuses primarily on the entry into salvation. He even goes so far as to argue for the centrality of this imagery in the soteriology of Paul. Paul, he argues, has packaged his soteriology within a forensic setting. God, the Creator, is seen as judge of all humanity. Humanity is guilty of sin and is therefore accountable to God for their sins. Although this Judge shows no favouritism, the norms he uses are tainted by grace and He consciously places himself on the side of the accused who are in Christ. In spite of this gracious process, the integrity of the juridical process is not compromised, since redemption and atonement came through Christ. That is why justification must be appropriated by faith. The believer receives a new identity and status with God and lives in a restored relationship with God, which will be confirmed at the final judgment.
- Tolmie shows that salvation is also expressed in terms of a radical *reversal of status*. Again the picture of humanity in a desperate and hopeless situation forms the framework of this imagery. Christ however intercedes with payment and transforms the status of believers, making them spiritually free. This is not unrestricted freedom, but a life lived under new obligations to God.
- Another way of describing the transition from enmity to friendship is expressed through the imagery of *reconciliation*. Breytenbach argues that the process of reconciliation was basically used to

describe the restoration of relations between humans. However, Paul applies it to the movement from enmity to peace and friendship between God and humans. God is the agent of this reconciliation, acting through the death of Christ, to bring restoration for humanity (with eschatological effects).

- Gräbe sees salvation in Ephesians and Colossians as being described in terms of *Weltangst*. Humans are regarded as being in a cosmic prison superintended by hostile spiritual presences and evil powers, which of course lead to *Weltangst*. Salvation from God comes through Christ who is far superior to all these powers. Through Christ those who were alienated from God have now been reconciled, and those who were separated from God or who were foreigners to his covenant have been brought near through the death of Christ. Believers now live in the presence of the Son of God, whom he loves.
- In the Thessalonian correspondence De Villiers demonstrates that we find a God whose characteristics are expressed in terms of salvation. Salvation is expressed in terms of a *new family* that emphasizes the unique bond, which came about between God and believers. Because believers are drawn into a corporate union their behaviour should also be positive towards one another. However, this intimate relationship also implies that they should share the fate of Jesus, also his death and resurrection. Resurrection will consummate the salvation, which they have appropriated. Until that time believers should express and maintain their identity as the family of God. In this way the dynamics of salvation are expressed in terms of the most basic social order in the ancient world.
- Malherbe, in his analysis of the Pastoral Epistles, emphasizes the link between soteriology and Christology. Christ stands central in the gracious soteriological process. In this gracious eternal plan of God the process of *learning* comes into focus. Malherbe shows that salvation is intrinsically related to the process of learning. The gracious God appears in history with the consequence that conditions of knowledge change. Knowledge of truth becomes possible, while baptism and the Spirit stand central to this process. The initiative starts with God and through Jesus the Spirit is given in baptism. Through the learning process people are guided in the art of living.

This short survey of some of the Pauline images used to explain the process of salvation, illustrates the variety of language and concepts used by Paul. Obviously there are also overlaps.

3.2. *Saved . . .*

Judging from the different essays on salvation in the Pauline literature, it seems plausible to identify a form of "shared-structure" of Pauline soteriology, even though it is on a certain level of abstraction. In virtually every case the contributors concluded that there was a negative human condition, which was remedied by a graceful God through Jesus with the result that the saved people enjoyed a new status and consequently positive relationships with God and each other. The restoration of the relationship between humans and God, with the consequences of this restoration, is constantly in focus. This is a broad outline, but it is time and again developed in the letters, although by means of different images. Obviously, individual images do no cover every aspect of this "shared-structure", but at least focuses in on one or more of its important aspects.

The development of salvation, as it is presented in the essays, will now receive brief attention.

3.2.1. *A Pessimistic Anthropology*

Salvation has to do with the pessimistic view of the human condition from which people are to be saved. They are ungodly weak sinners (Breytenbach) who lived in hostility towards God. Paul regards humans as accountable to God and their sin constitutes guilt (Du Toit), alienation from and enmity between humans and God. Paul also argues in a corporate way about this—humanity is indeed in trouble. Humans should be saved from themselves, their condition of slavery (Tolmie), their own sinfulness and weakness, their own lack of knowledge (Malherbe), their enmity and alienation from God. Yes, humans need to be saved from a negative condition, which is described in a variety of ways. What is needed is a gracious God.

3.2.2. *Gracious Salvation*

Because of the negative anthropological frame from which Paul departs, grace seems necessary, as Joubert, with several others, points out. Grace is the frame within which salvation can become a reality. A gracious God alone, as benefactor, can change people and secure a future for them. Believers are put in a new sphere of *gratia continua* in which corresponding human reaction is called upon.

3.2.3. *Salvation by God in Christ*
That salvation is mediated or made possible through Christ forms a central component of all the imagery discussed. Through the actions of a gracious God and Christ salvation is brought about. The old existence (*inter alia* through a prolepsis of the eschatological judgment) is terminated which makes a newly created humanity in Christ possible. The grace of God becomes apparent in Jesus (Joubert); truth and learning comes through Jesus (Malherbe), Jesus must ensure justice in the forensic process (du Toit), Jesus pays the price for freedom (Tolmie), and brokers reconciliation (Breytenbach). He also takes away the *Weltangst* (Gräbe) and stands central in constituting and defining the new family of God (De Villiers). It is clear that in all the images the position and actions of Jesus are constitutive.

3.2.4. *Salvation leads to a new status—resocialization takes place*
Still part of these images is the newly attained status of standing in a completely new relationship with God through Christ. This new status is instituted unreservedly, whether it is the result of payment, forensic activities, learning, reconciliation, or simply based on the superiority of Christ to the evil powers, or becoming part of God's family. All these images point to restored relationship between God and humanity, as well as between believers themselves, based on the changed status and identity of believers. Social and ethical responsibilities are correspondingly adjusted. This restored relationship between God and humans forms the core of what soteriology is all about.

3.3. *Images and Salvation*

Paul does not use a single or even a coherent set of images in expressing his soteriological ideas. However, from the relevant essays it has become apparent that it is not irresponsible to speak of unity amidst the diversity, even if it is on a certain level of abstraction. The unity can broadly be described as the dire position of humans being changed by the gracious salvific actions of God, leading to the restoration of relations, changing enmity into peace and friendship. This newly acquired status of believers puts them under an obligation to act according to their status. Different aspects of this process are presented in different images, each with its own focus, as is evident from these essays.

4. Further Mosaic: Hebrews, the General Epistles, and Revelation

Reading Hebrews, the General Epistles, and Revelation expands and enriches the mosaic of salvific images used in the New Testament. Again it is a matter of unity amidst diversity. Differences in genre, situations addressed, as well as chosen vocabulary, seem to contribute towards a considerable diversity.

4.1 *Hebrews* has its own "language world" of sacrifice, covenant, High priest, etc. Sin and death—which are associated with unbelief and faithlessness—are the barriers to overcome. It leads to wrongful actions and is the source of impurity and defilement. However, God is faithful and will deliver sinners from the oppression of evil powers. Christ, as the pioneer in the battle against Satan, overcame the power of Satan through his incarnation, death and resurrection. The relationship with God is restored, believers are delivered from judgment and they can now live with hope and expectation for the future. Then they will share in the heavenly glory in the everlasting presence of God. Although the destruction of the evil powers is not yet complete, it is nonetheless overshadowed by the power of deliverance. Final fulfillment awaits believers as they embark on a journey as the new Israel. Believers now have the means of dealing with the ongoing threat of sin by living faithfully in anticipation of the final fulfillment of God's promises. Although they already experience liberation, they are still on their way to their glorious destiny.

The principal source for this deliverance image is the story of Israel's liberation from bondage in Egypt. The believers are encouraged to persevere in faith on their own journey to rest and glory. Motifs like high priest, new covenant, atonement, tabernacle, offerings, etc. form the language pool from which the author of Hebrews draws in presenting his message.

4.2 In the essay on *James* it is also argued that believers receive a new identity, which could be linked to being the first fruits of a new Israel. New social borders are created. People are saved though faith and the authenticity of faith is measured according to works. This letter stands in the Jewish wisdom tradition, which means that perfection, wholeness, and completeness are important. Absolute loyalty,

which is publicly and corporately displayed, is therefore required. Thus the community's existence, as well as their ultimate salvation, is ensured.

4.3 The *Letters of John* (as well as the Gospel according to John) and *1 Peter* show strong similarities in soteriological expressions, although the situations reflected in the different documents differ. The image of the family of God dominates. People, who are dead in sin—also called slaves to sin in 1 Peter and the Gospel according to John—are being born into the family of God. This new reality of being in the family of God and experiencing the privileges linked to this reality forms the core of how salvation is expressed. 1 Peter further pictures the salvation event as a *patria potestas* who redeems believers (former slaves) into his household through the blood of Jesus. The Father-King transforms the saved into his nation. There are smaller images that are used like sheep that are returned to the Shepherd or of people who are healed through the wounds of Christ.

4.4 This brings us to the *Apocalypse of John*, which reflects some crisis in a Christian community at the end of the first century. It seems as if the message of salvation does not so much reside in soteriological terms, but in the semantic unfolding of the apocalyptic message. Salvation goes hand in hand with the role of the Lamb and the unfolding of God's judgment. The soteriological consequences lie within the appropriation of salvation, the acknowledgement of God's earthly rule and the climax in the marriage of the Lamb and the new heaven and earth.

In spite of the diversity in these documents, they all emphasize the problem of sin that needs to be overcome and that happens through faith in Jesus. On this basis God will restore the relationship between him and these believers. He gives them a new identity, resulting in a redefinition of their social status. In the Letters of John and Peter this resocialization is formulated in terms of the family of God, while Hebrews uses the image of the eschatological people of God.

5. A Few Tentative Remarks

It cannot be denied that *images* play an important role in expressing soteriological ideas in the New Testament. These images are taken

from a variety of backgrounds, for instance, forensic, economic, social, political, and apocalyptic. It is therefore imperative to ask questions about the functionality and semantic potential of this variety of images. For instance, do images describe or create reality? In other words, do these images refer to some objective (spiritual) reality or do they simply create such a reality in the minds of those who hear and interpret these images?

It might be argued that in a sense both happen. Without language people will not be able to understand or talk about a particular reality. In this sense there is a creative side to images. They make it possible for people to imagine such a (spiritual) reality. That is however not the full picture. The different images seem to focus on similar issues like the alienation from God, his actions to restore proper relationships between him and the believers or on their resultant salvation. The common focus of these images *inter alia* seems to suggest an existing reality, which is to be described by means of these different images. These images simply want to describe what the authors of the books of the New Testament believed "to be there".

5.1. *A larger picture . . .?*

What seems to be "there"? It seems that on a certain level of abstraction, a "larger picture" may be assumed. Different and diverging expressions may be used to describe this "larger picture", like "master story" or "shared structure", but such terms are often more confusing than clarifying. Be that as it may, this "master story" (or "shared structure") is unfolded and expanded by means of different images. These different images are not comprehensive in the sense that individual images cover the whole "master story" in all its facets; to the contrary. They should rather be seen as building blocks of this 'larger story'. It became apparent in the essays that certain aspects of the "larger story" are covered by certain images, while others are used by the same author to cover other elements of the "master story". This "master story" that seems to form the background of most, if not all, of the New Testament books, could be described as follows:

There seems to be general agreement on the anthropological perspective that humans are in trouble in their relation to God. People are separated from God and a relationship between them is absent. They cannot restore the relationship on their own, because they are not in a position to do that. Different figurative descriptions are used

to describe this dire situation, for instance, people are dead, or are in slavery, do not follow the "new Moses", are covered in guilt or sin, etc. Each of these descriptions forms part of a different image (i.e. guilt needs forensic language, death needs birth of giving life, not being on the correct path needs conversion, sin needs atonement, etc.). Nevertheless, these images essentially share a common focus, namely to express the hopeless situation of humans in need. Humans are not in a position to restore this broken relationship between God and themselves on their own.

God, however, comes into action and opens real possibilities for the restoration of this relationship. His motivation for doing this, for instance, is described in terms of grace or love. Again different images come into play to express what God has planned and done—forensically people are justified, socially they become friends or children of God, cultically they are purified, etc.

Asking *how* this happened, again leads us to a variety of images. Either a price was paid, or a person was born from God, or judgment was made in favour of a person, or a sacrifice was offered, etc. All these and other images want to explain how it could have happened that this relationship between God and humans was restored. In basically all the cases the different images were linked to Christological events, and more specifically to the cross and resurrection. Jesus does what is necessary to restore the relationship and ensures an enduring and glorious result—people will be with God forever. Obviously, this restored and healed relationship continues under certain conditions, namely, obedience, behaviour according to the rules of the new family, substantiating faith through deeds, being loyal and living from the hope in a glorious future, etc. Although fulfillment is still awaited, believers are already experiencing the presence of this new era and should accordingly live in loyalty and obedience within this new salvific reality. These expressions are part and parcel of the images employed to express the soteriological reality.

5.2. *What has Priority: Image or Message?*

This brings us to the next point, namely, the insight that not the image, but the message has priority. Images are mechanisms or instruments used to express certain salvific ideas. The means of expressing an idea (image) should be distinguished from the content of the expression (message). The image is the means used to refer

to a specific reality (in this case the soteriological reality), but it is not the reality itself. The message of the image, rather than the image itself should be focused on. Images serve a functional purpose in expressing these ideas. One should therefore rather focus on the conceptual reality introduced by a particular image and thus move beyond the formal expression.

Images are not comprehensive, but have a limited scope of expression and should not be over-interpreted. No single image can cover the soteriological event in its entirety. Du Toit, for instance, indicated at the end of his essay that forensic images focus on the entry into salvation and not on the consequences. Familial images are also used selectively, covering both the entry into salvation as well as the consequences, but not the treatment of guilt or atonement. This implies that images should not be read as independent mutually exclusive and conflicting expressions but should be interrelated. Each one contributes in its own way to the full soteriological landscape. It also seems that different authors describe the same landscape by using different imageries. This should be seen as enrichment of soteriological expression. This is true of the documents intra-textually (images expressing different aspects related to soteriology are mixed in a single document—see for instance 1 Peter, Hebrews, the Johannine or even the Pauline literature) as well as inter-textually between the different documents of the New Testament.

5.3. *Physical Situations Influence Soteriological Language*

The physical situation in which a document was written has a formative influence on the language and scope of the soteriology of a particular book (see, for instance, the essays on the Gospel of John, James, Hebrews, Revelation, Ephesians and Colossians, to name but a few). This implies that specific issues are addressed in specific ways. If this is true, the implication is that in the writings of the New Testament (or at least in most of them) there is no effort to formulate a comprehensive soteriology. Rather, soteriological images, emphasizing different aspects relevant to that particular situation, are presented. It therefore seems inappropriate to talk of a comprehensive soteriology in the sense of "the soteriology of this or that book . . .", except if your text basis is wide. It was for instance argued that John's soteriology by no means wants to cover the full scope of soteriology for the sake of presenting a comprehensive soteriology. As

was pointed out, the Johannine soteriological language is functional in a situation of specific conflict, which means that only certain aspects of the total scope of what soteriology involves received attention. The same could be said of New Testament documents like James, Hebrews, Apocalypse, to name but a few.

If this point is accepted, the implications thereof should be taken seriously. It means that one should be cautious in speaking of the "soteriology of John, James, Hebrews, Peter or Paul", implying that they represent independent, inclusive, and complete soteriological systems. To use John's Gospel as example again: the soteriological language in this Gospel does not represent the complete or inclusive scope of what may be called soteriology, but it is influenced by its specific circumstances, which served as a natural mechanism of selection for what was discussed in this Gospel. Thus the perspective as well as the language of soteriological expression was determined. Changing circumstances will impact on the character of linguistic or conceptual expressions. This is precisely the case with the Johannine Letters, where a "blood theology" is present and is developed next to John's favourite familial image. This should not be seen as different soteriology, but as expanded soteriology. When circumstances changed, concepts and language also changed.

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